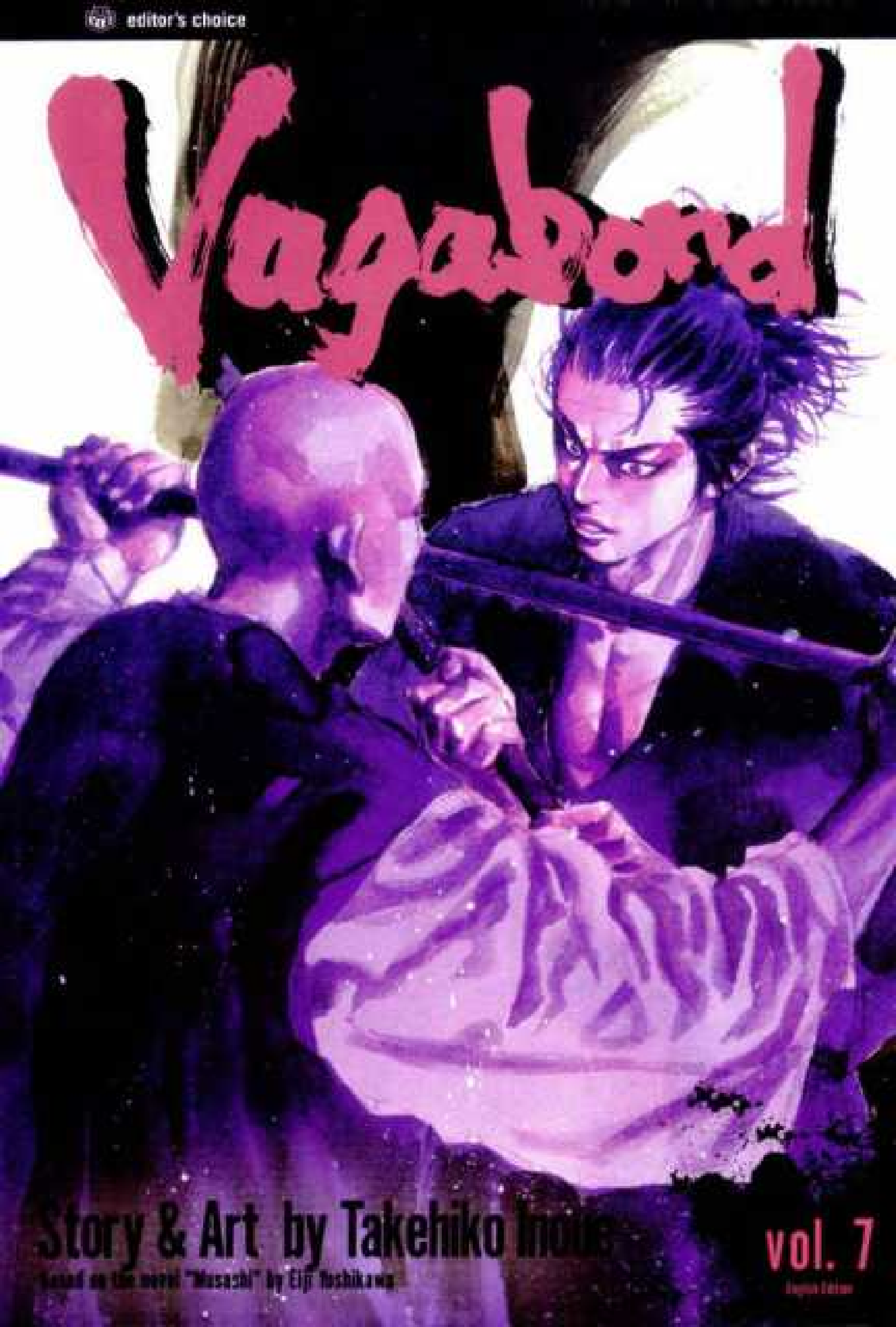
editor's choice

Vagabond



Story & Art by Takehiko Inoue

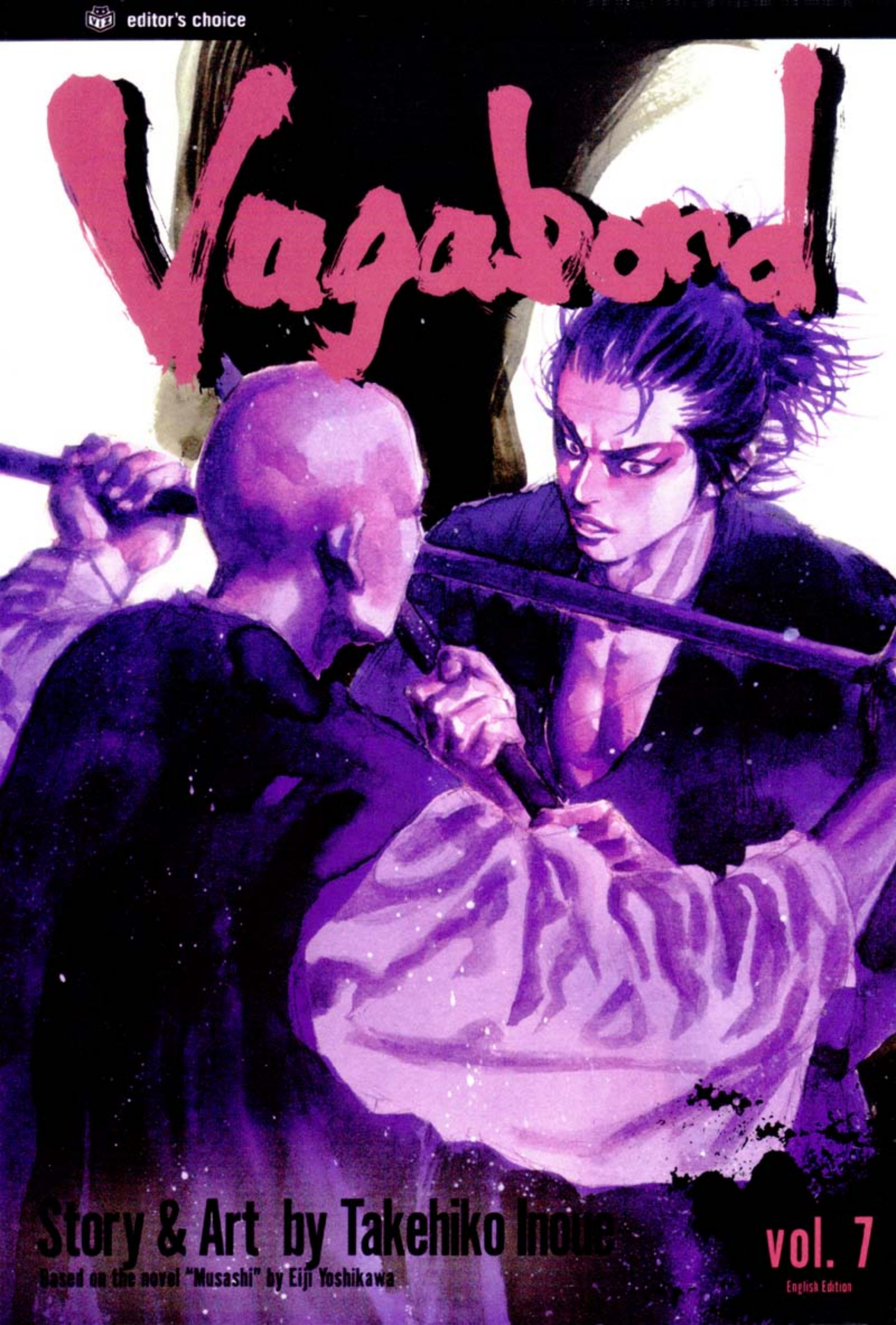
Based on the novel "Musashi" by Eiji Yoshikawa

vol. 7

Viz Signature Edition

editor's choice

Vagabond



Story & Art by Takehiko Inoue

Based on the novel "Musashi" by Eiji Yoshikawa

vol. 7

English Edition

SHK
SHK
...TOMORROW.
INSHLIN
IS
COMING...
KRAK

Vagabond
#60
vol. 7
Duel's Eve
Story & Art by Takehiko Inoue
Based on the novel "Musashi" by Eiji Yoshikawa

THUD

FSH
FSH
FSH
KKRL

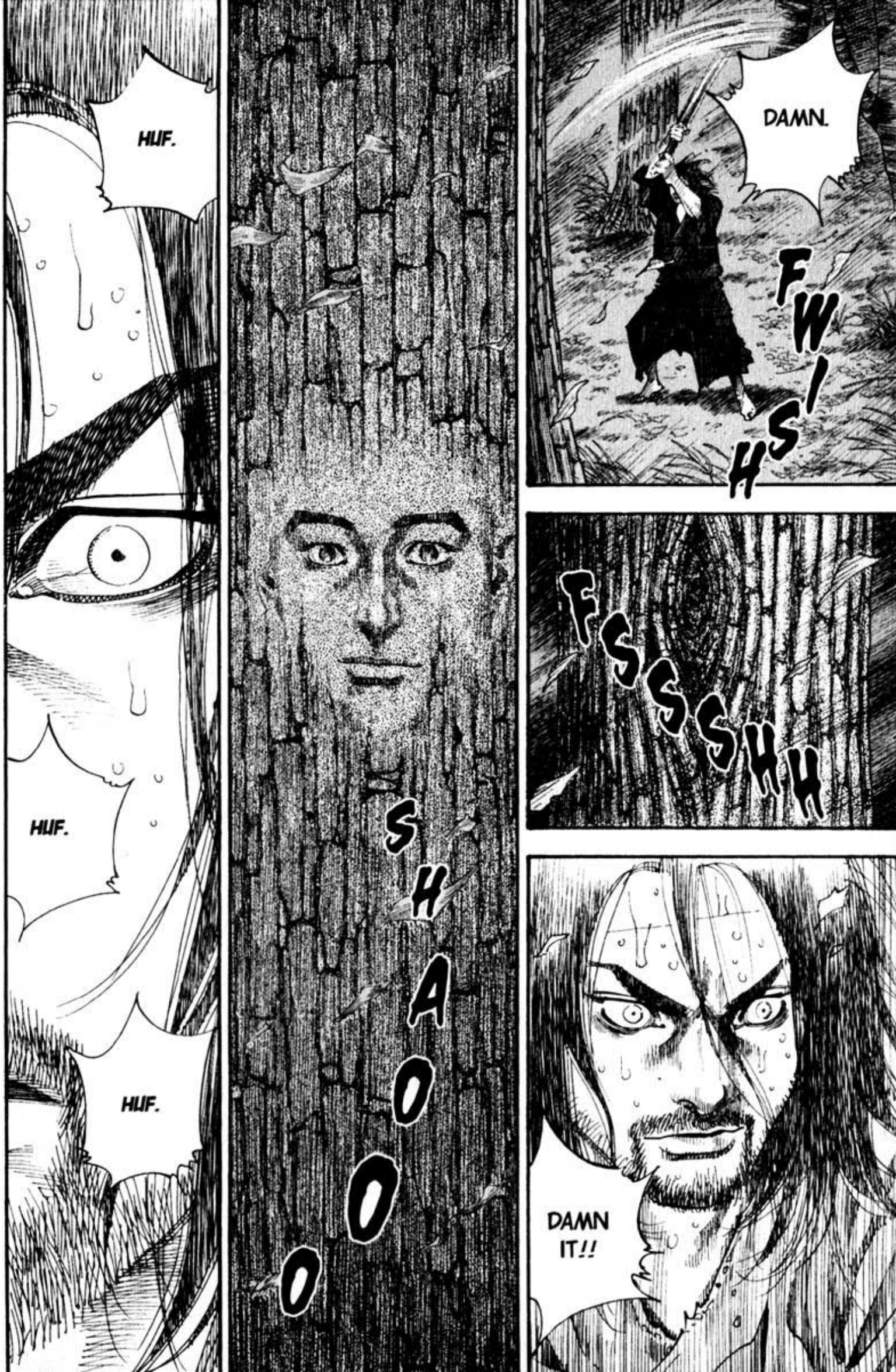
FSHHHH

SHAOOOO

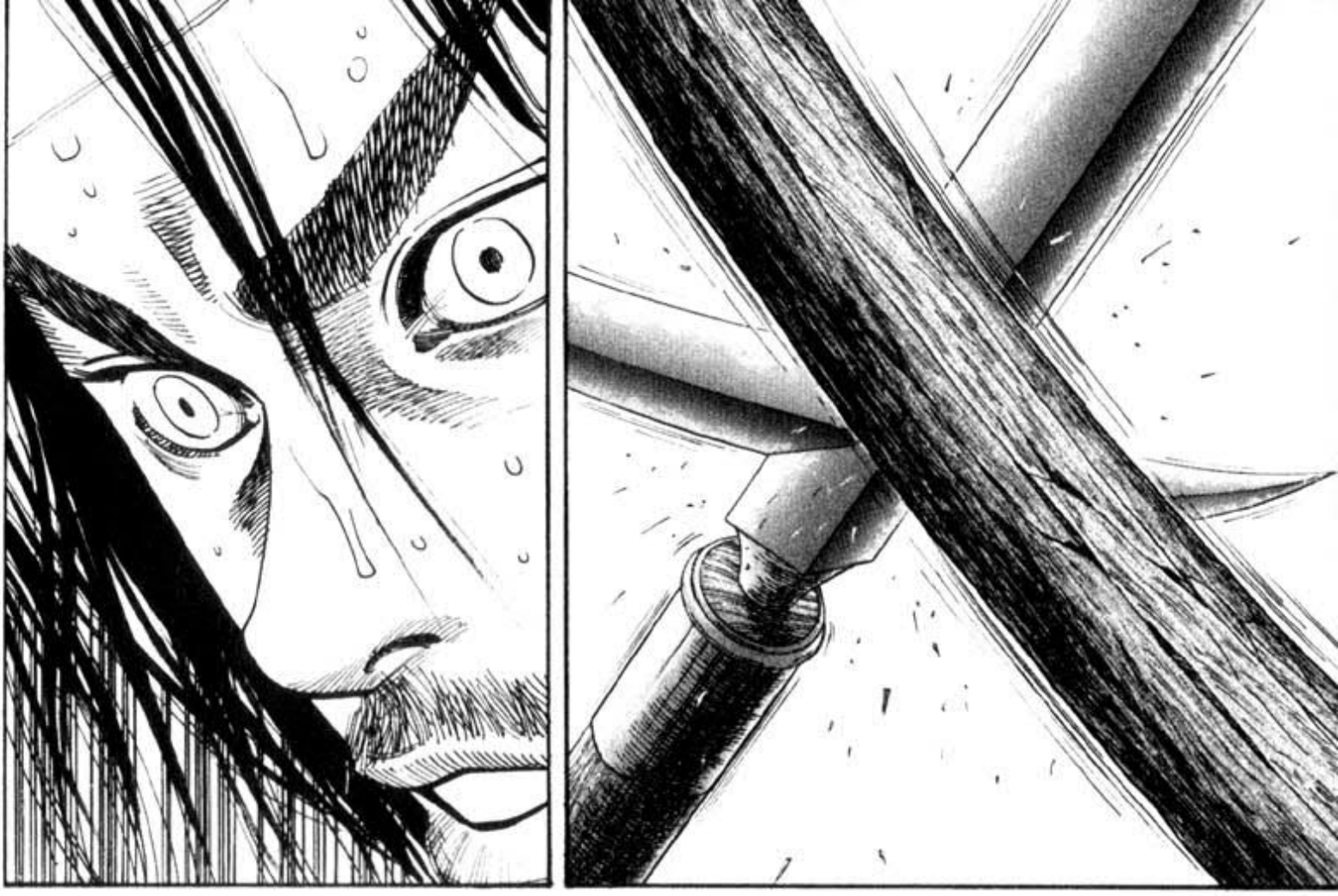
FWOOSH

FSHHHH

TOK
TOK
TONK
THWAK
BRR
BRR
BRR
FWOOSH
YAH!
YAH!
HAH!


DAMN.
FWISH
FSSSSHH
DAMN IT!!
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
SHAOOOO

FSSHH
YAHHH!
THWAK



SHUNk

FSSSSH
FSHH
SHAAAAAA
FZZ
FZZ
HUF.
HUF.
FSH
H
H
HUF.
H
H
H
HUF.

YOU, AGAIN...?
I DON'T HAVE ANY FOOD FOR YOU TODAY...

HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

I DID ALL I COULD.
NOW IT'S FALL...
SUMMER HAS PASSED...

WAS IT MERELY FOR YOUR OWN SATISFACTION?

SPENDING ALL THIS TIME ALONE IN THE MOUNTAINS...
BUT WHAT HAVE YOU ACTUALLY ACCOMPLISHED...?

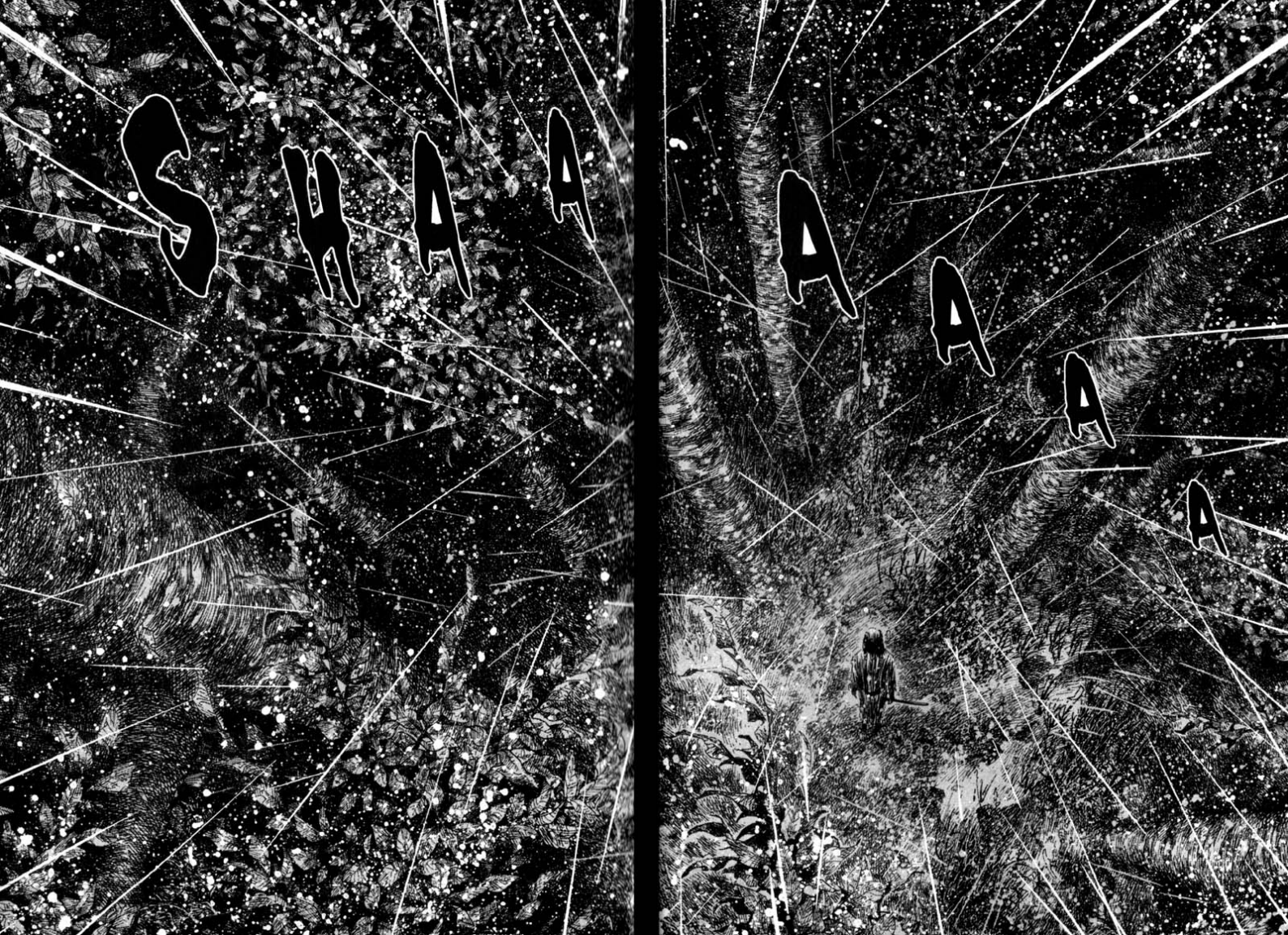
INEI IS GREAT BUT HE'S GETTING OLD AND FRAIL.
HE CAN'T COMPARE TO INSHUN'S YOUTH AND VIGOR.

I'VE BEEN TRAINING WITH THE GREAT HOZOIN INEI...
I'VE MADE PROGRESS.

...THEN ANYONE COULD BECOME A MASTER.
IF IT WERE JUST A MATTER OF TRAINING FOR A MONTH OR TWO...

GRP

FSSSH
FSSSH
BRR
HUF.
BRR
BRR
HUF.
HUF.
BRR


SHAA
AAAAA

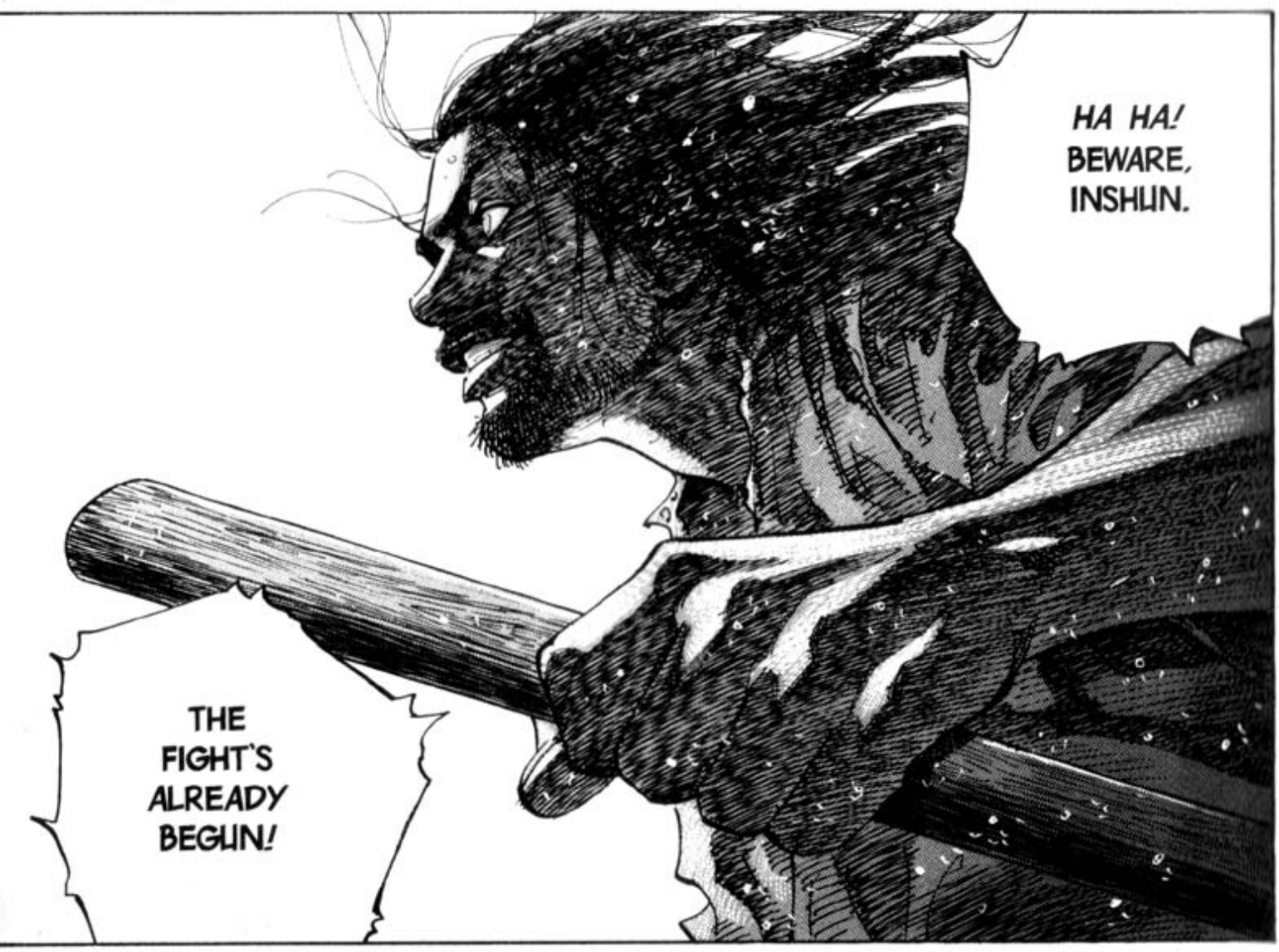
PLISH
PLISH
PLISH

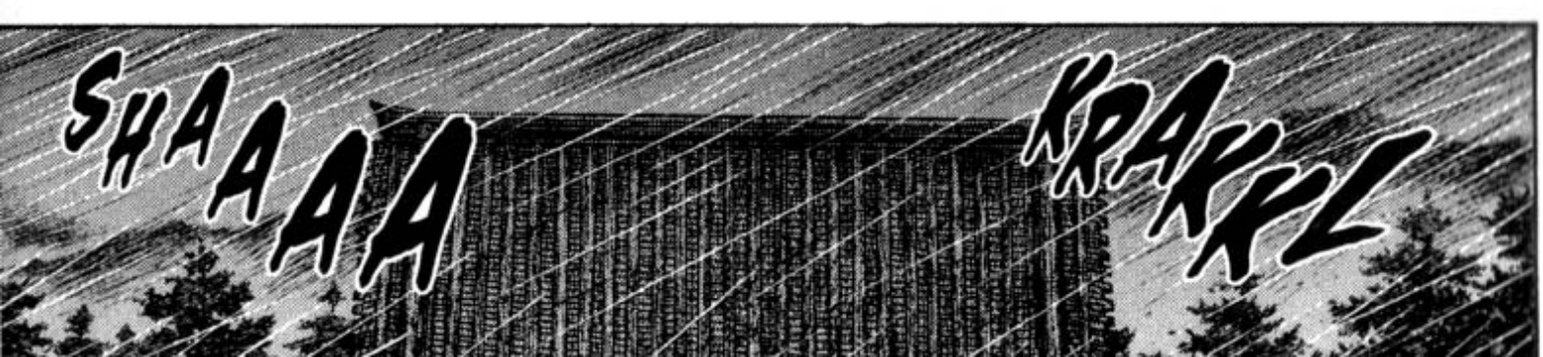
SHAA
SHAA

KRAK!

ROARR

SHAAAAA
I'LL MAKE THE FIRST MOVE.
THAT'S RIGHT, CATCHING THE OPPONENT OFF GUARD IS JUST ANOTHER STRATEGY.
HUF.
NO NEED TO STAY OUT IN THE WOODS UNTIL MORNING.
HUF.
PLISH
PLISH


HA HA! BEWARE, INSHUN.
THE FIGHT'S ALREADY BEGUN!

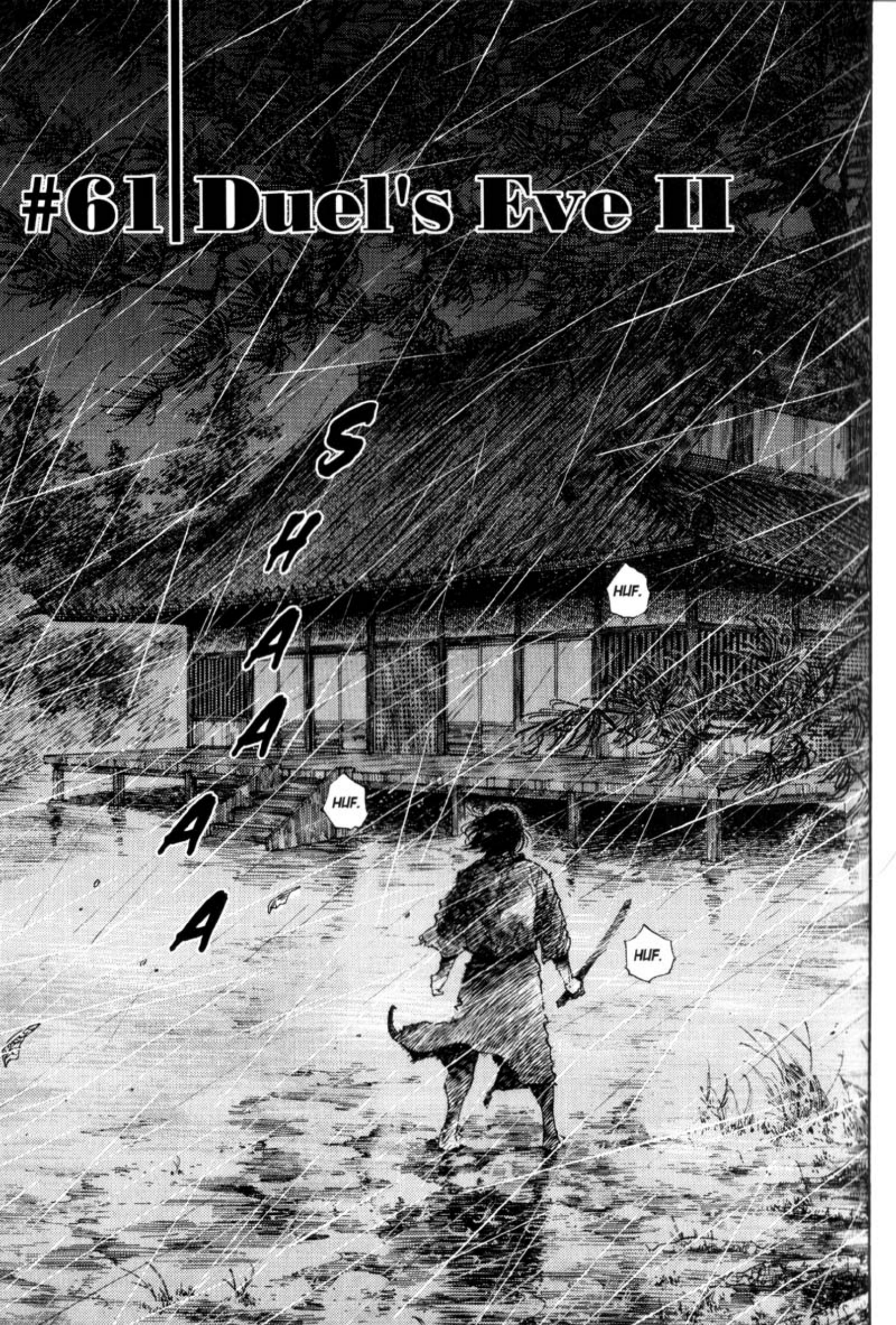

SHAAAA
KRAKKL

I FEEL LIKE A KID.
I'M SO EXCITED I CAN'T SLEEP.
FSSHHH

Vagabond

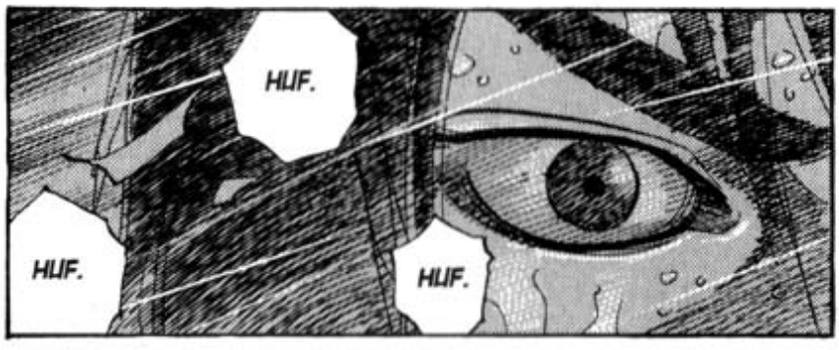
いぬ
(DOG.)

ねこと へんてこようで ジツは
やはり だいぶすがう
(LOOKS SIMILAR TO A CAT, BUT ACTUALLY
IT IS VERY DIFFERENT.)


#61 Duel's Eve III
SHAAAAAA
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

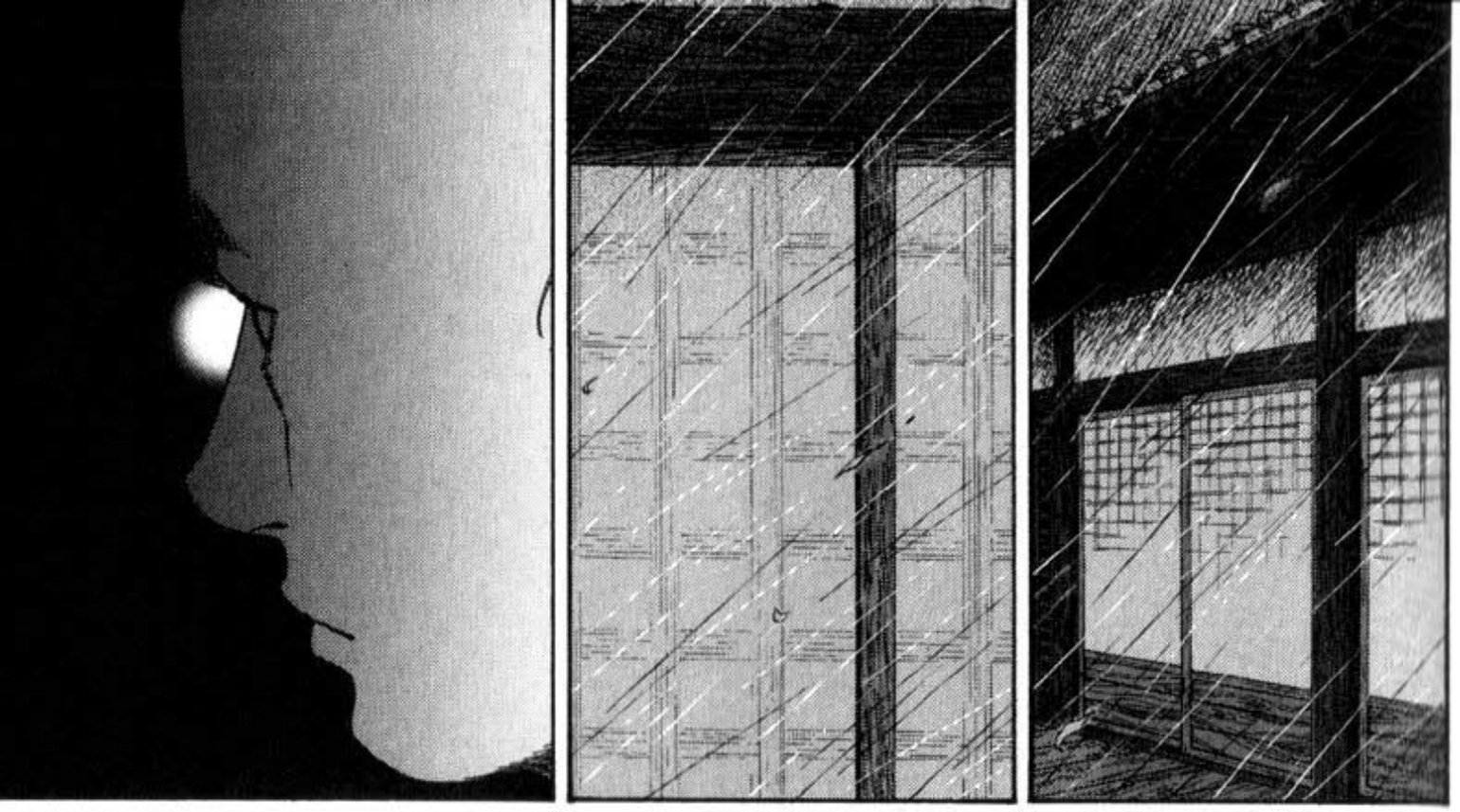
HUF.
HUF.

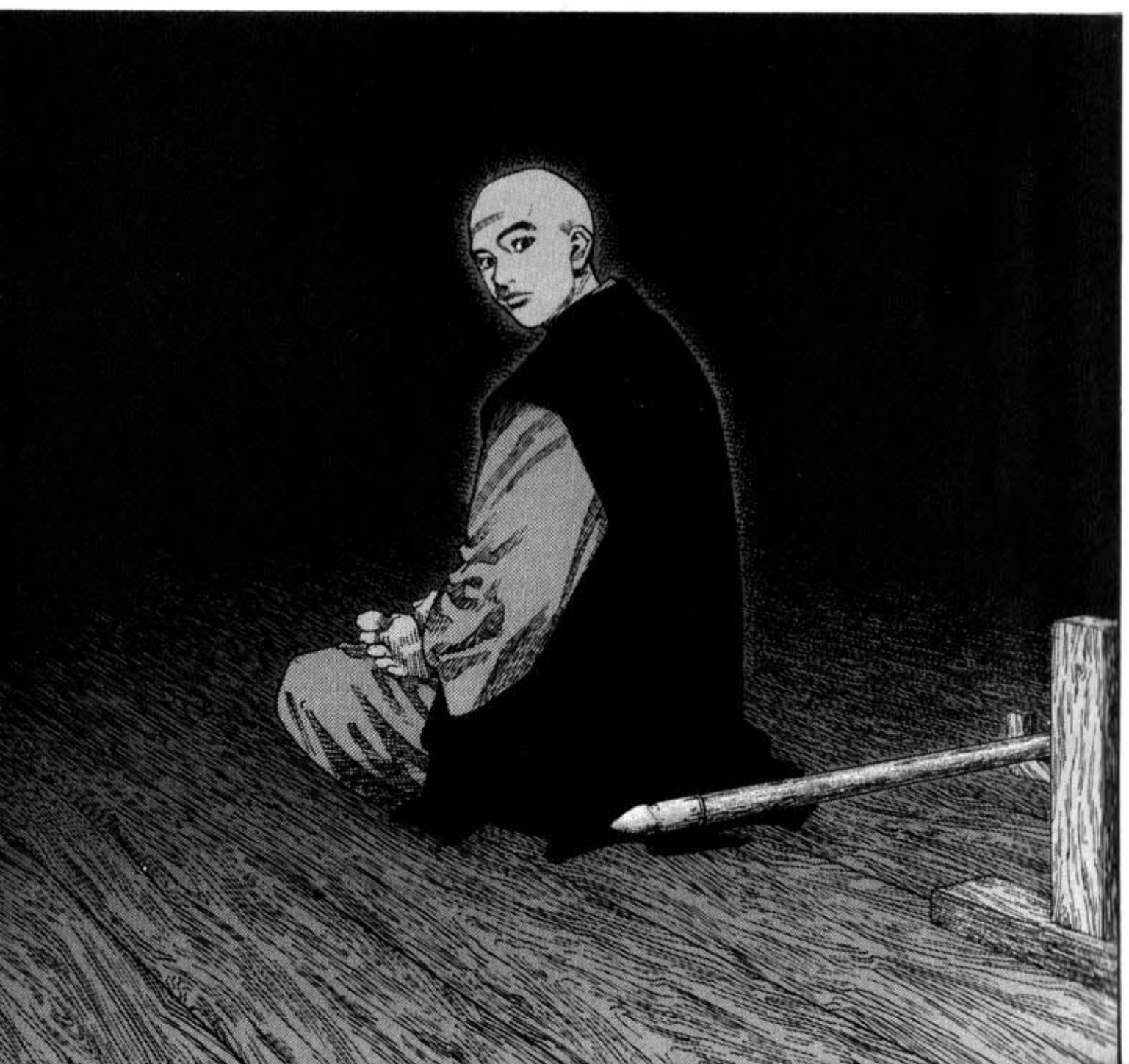
ZAKK


HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

SHAAAAA

ROARRRR
HUF.
INSHUN!!
HUF.
I'M HERE!
HUF.





FWICH

HERE I GO.
HMM.
SHLIP
ZAK
HUF.
HUF.
WHUD
PLISH

ROAR
RRR

KRAKK!

RRRRRR
YOU'RE PATHETIC, TAKEZŌ.
CAN'T YOU MAKE ANY PROGRESS?

HUF.
IT CAN'T BE.
HUF.

YOU REALIZE YOU HAVE NO CHANCE OF WINNING SO YOU RESORT TO THIS SURPRISE ATTACK...
...BUT YOU CAN'T EVEN GO THROUGH WITH IT.

HUF.
FATHER...
HUF.
HUF.

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED ONE BIT!
THMP THMP
HUF.
THIS IS A DREAM.
THMP THMP
HUF.
IT HAS TO BE A DREAM.
HUF.
THMP THMP
HUF.
HUF.
...AND CHOOSE TREACHERY.
YOU GIVE IN TO YOUR FEAR...
HUF.
I...
HUF.
HUF.
YOU ESCAPED FROM INSHUN IN TERROR...
...AND NOW YOU'RE ATTEMPTING A SNEAK ATTACK!
HUF.
I...
HUF.

YOU TRIED THE SAME THING ON ME ONE NIGHT, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED AT ALL SINCE THEN.

ABSURD!
WHOOOSH

I AM MAKING PROGRESS...
SHAAAA

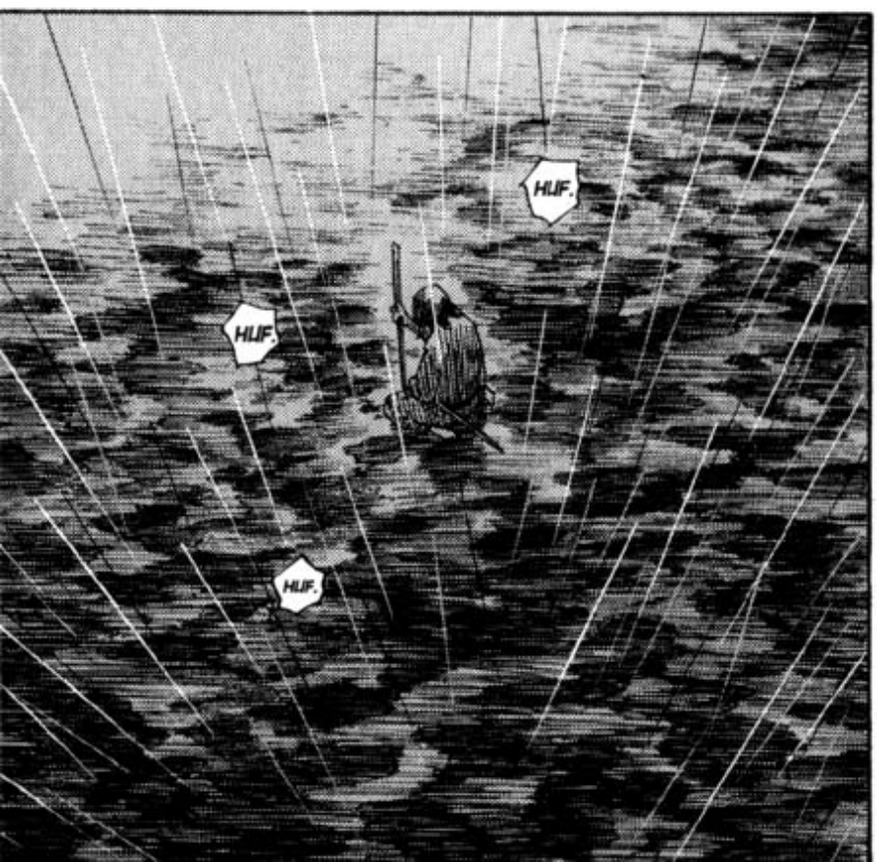
I'M GOING TO BE INVINCIBLE...
A

YOU WEAKLING.
WHY PRETEND TO BE STRONG?
IT HAS TO BE.
THIS IS A DREAM.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

I AM STRONG!
I'M ON MY WAY TO BECOMING INVINCIBLE. WHY MUST YOU INTERFERE?
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

I AM THE MIGHTIEST!
I WILL NOT LET YOU GET IN MY WAY.
SHAAAA

FWOOOSH
YAHH!


HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

YOU
SHALL
DIE
SOON.

!!
PLISH
PLISH

PLISH
PLISH

I WONDER HOW MATAHACHI IS DOING?
HAVE YOU MADE A NAME FOR YOURSELF...?

TUGG

WHAT A HORRIBLE STORM...
IT REMINDS ME OF THE BATTLE OF SEKIGA-HARA...
SO MUCH MUD...

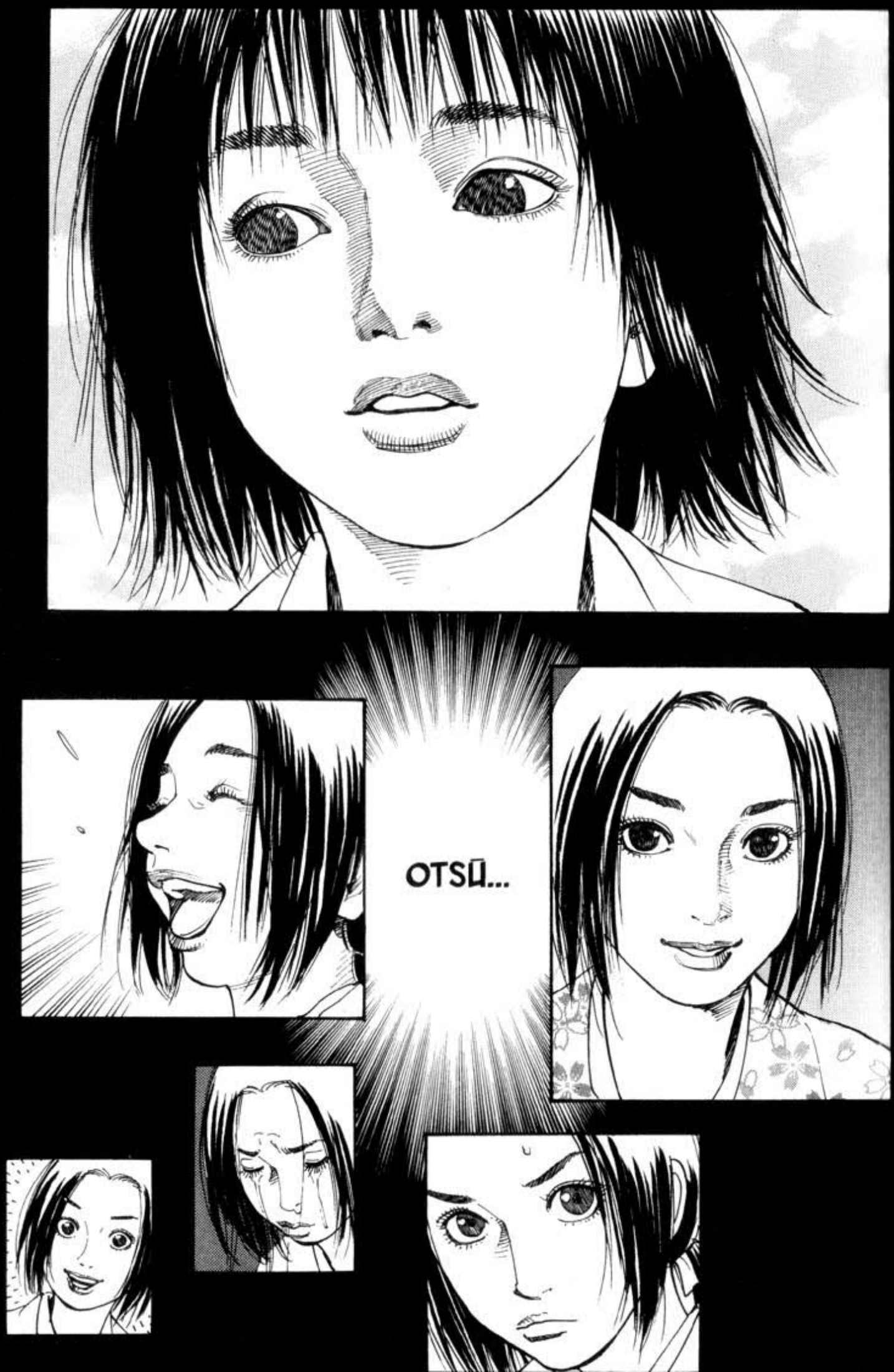
HUF.
HUF.

I DON'T THINK I'LL SURVIVE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE A NAME FOR MYSELF...
HUF.
MATA-HACHI...
HUF.
HUF.

OTSŪ...

IT'S ALMOST DAWN...

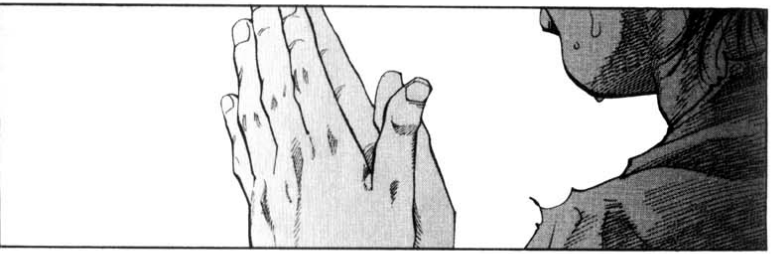
OTSŪ...


OTSŪ...

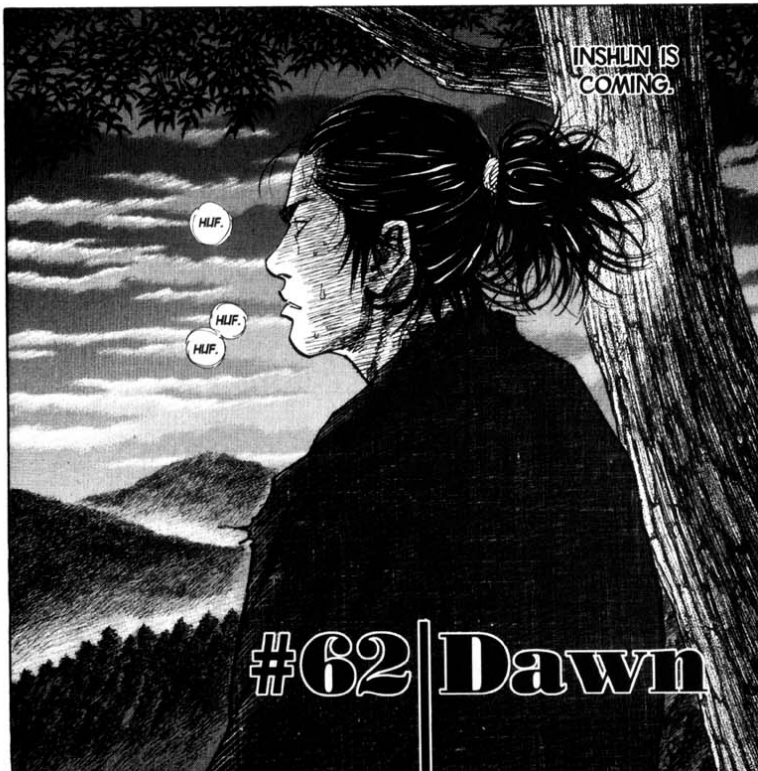
I
DON'T
WANT
TO DIE.

ON SOLITARY NIGHTS IN THE WOODS...
MUSASHI OCCASIONALLY PASSED TIME CARVING BUDDHA STATUES.
HE HAD QUITE A TALENT FOR IT.
BUT FOR MUSASHI...
...TONIGHT'S POOR EXAMPLE OF HIS CRAFT WAS A FOREBODING SIGN OF THE NEXT DAY'S DUEL.

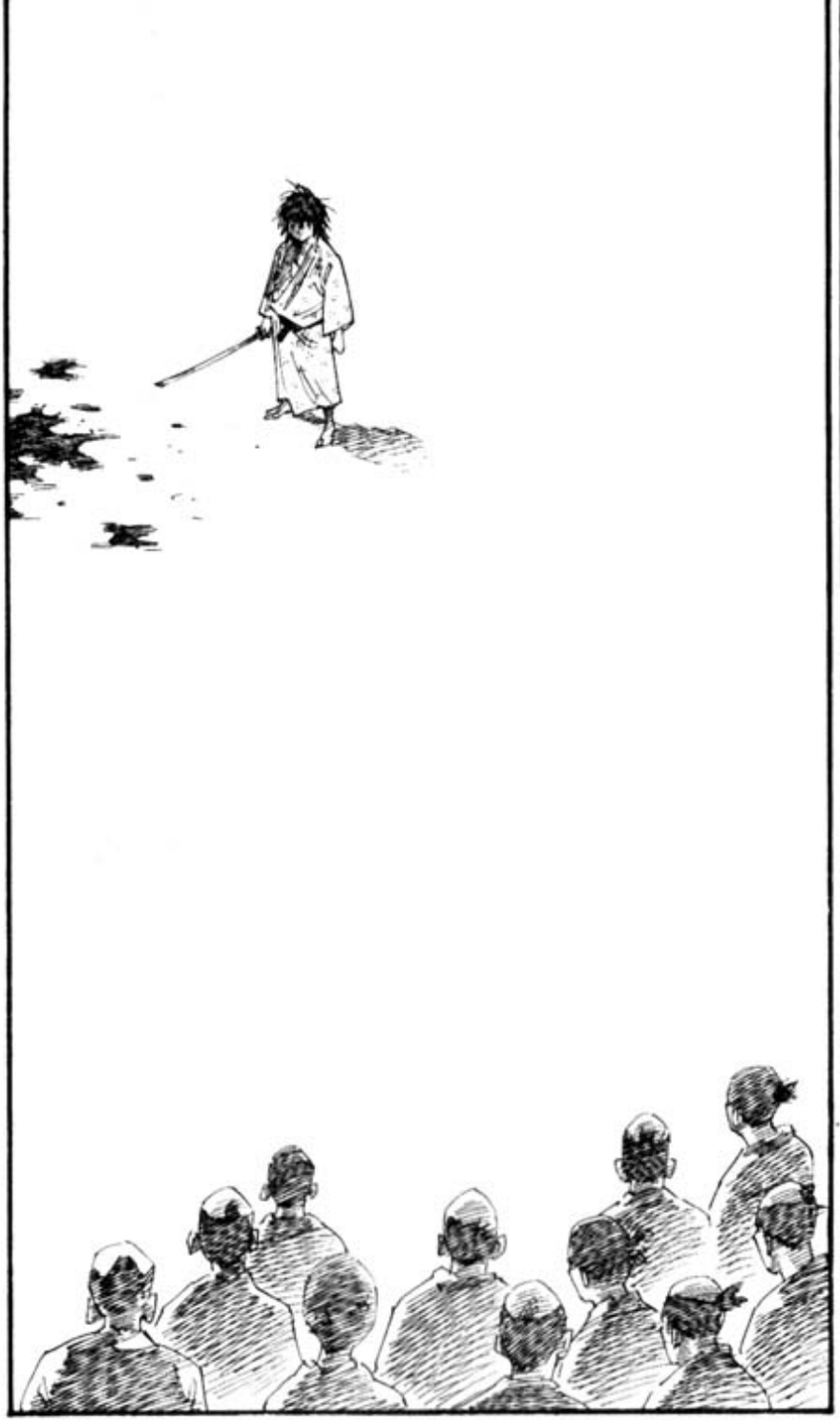
IT'S DAWN.



HMPH.
HAH...
EVIL...
A DEMON'S CHILD... THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE USED TO CALL ME...
HMPH...
UNBELIEV-ABLE.
HOW CAN I BE PRAYING...?

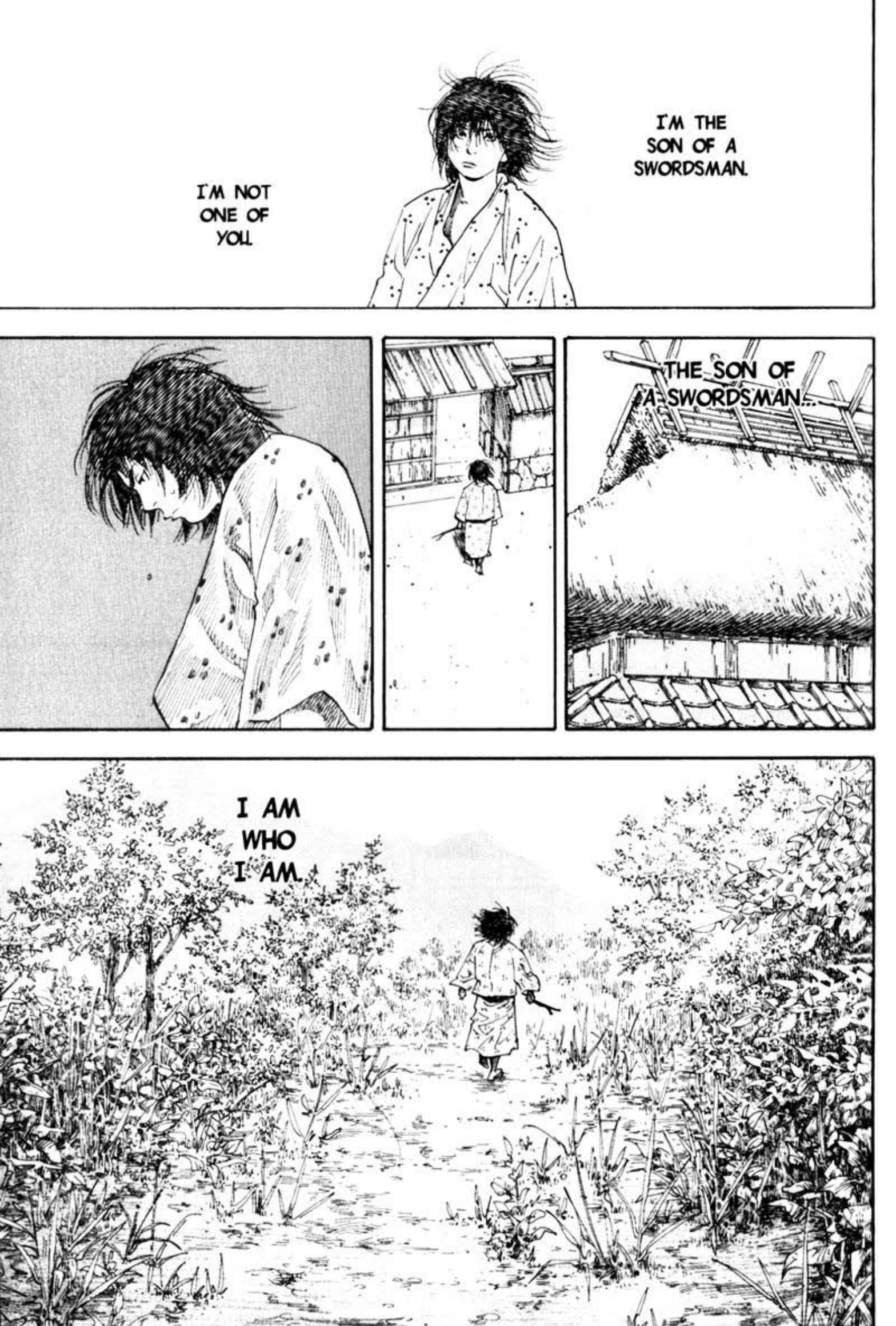

INSHUN IS COMING.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

#62 | Dawn

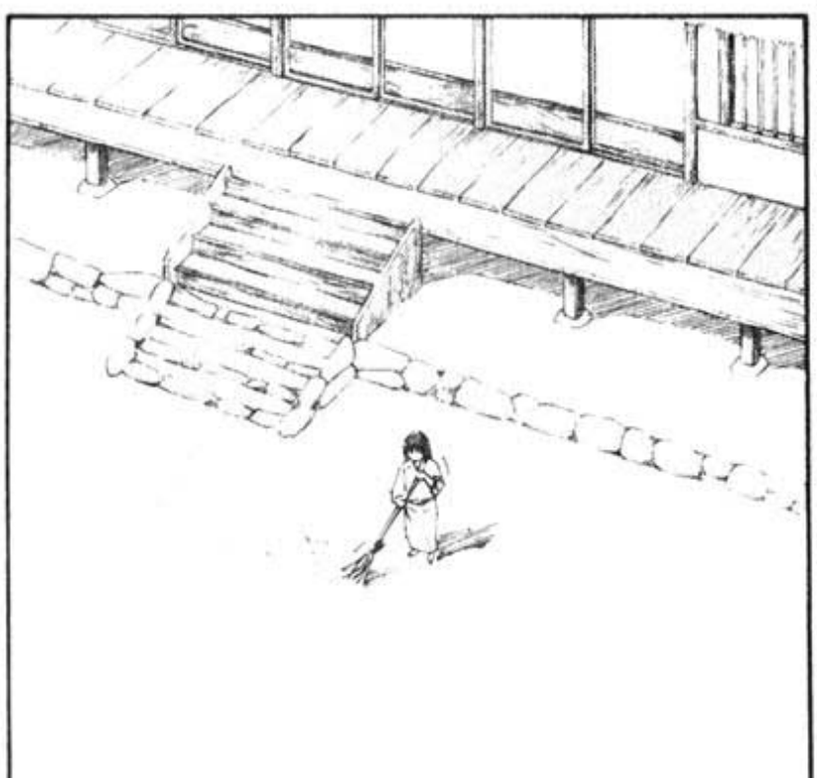


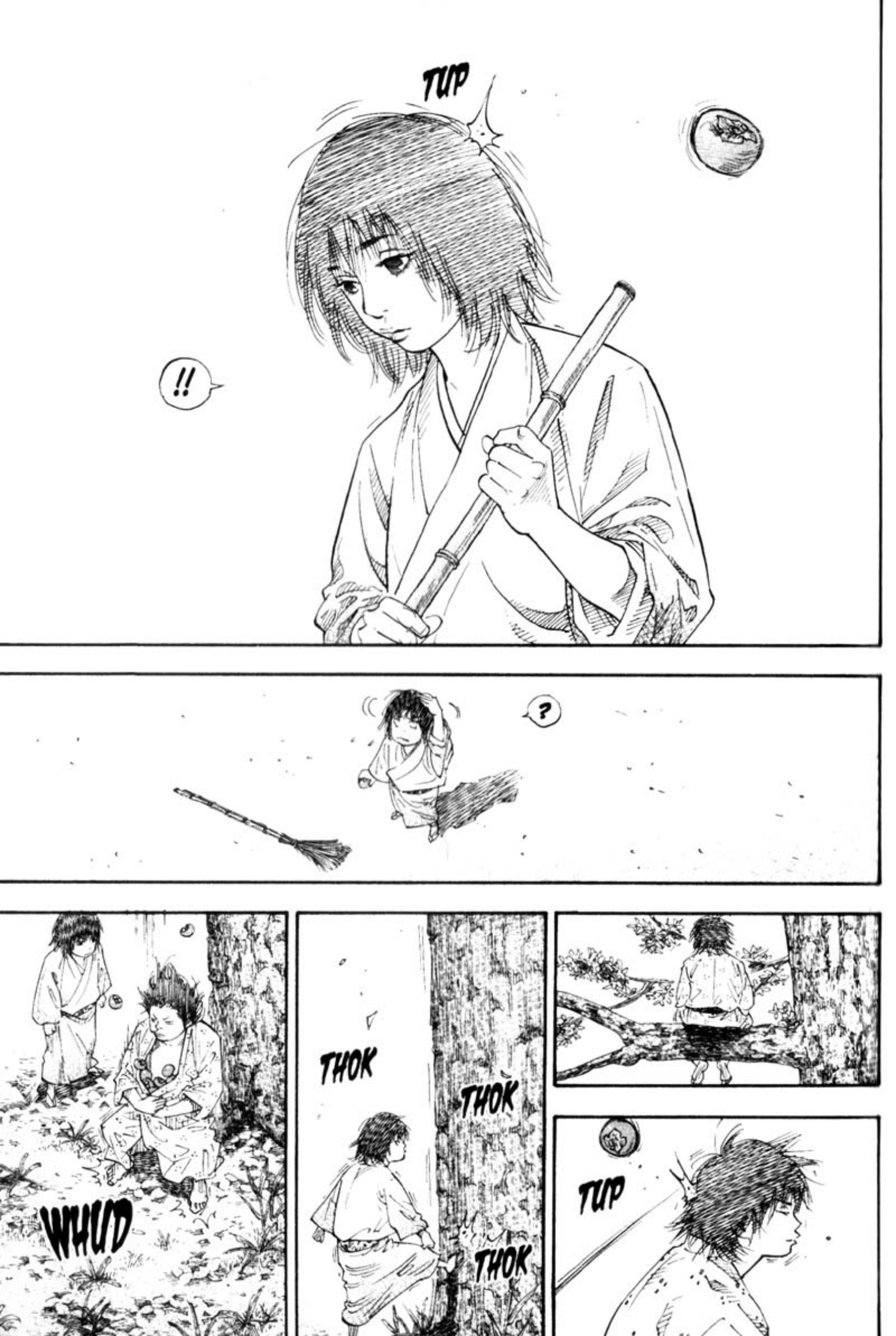
YOU FIEND!
YOU BEAST!

YOU'RE EVIL!
DEMON'S CHILD!


I'M NOT ONE OF YOU.
I'M THE SON OF A SWORDSMAN.
THE SON OF A SWORDSMAN...
I AM WHO I AM.

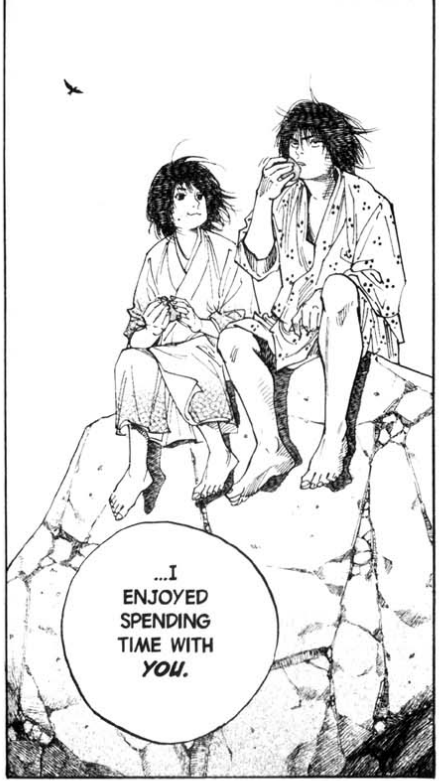
I MUST FOLLOW MY OWN PATH.



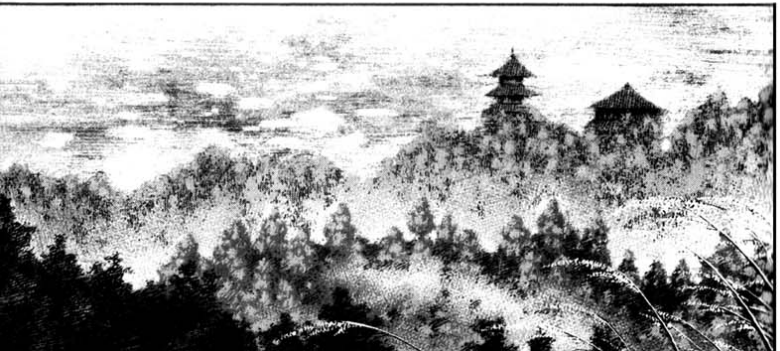

TUP
!!
?
WHUD
THOK
THOK
THOK
TUP

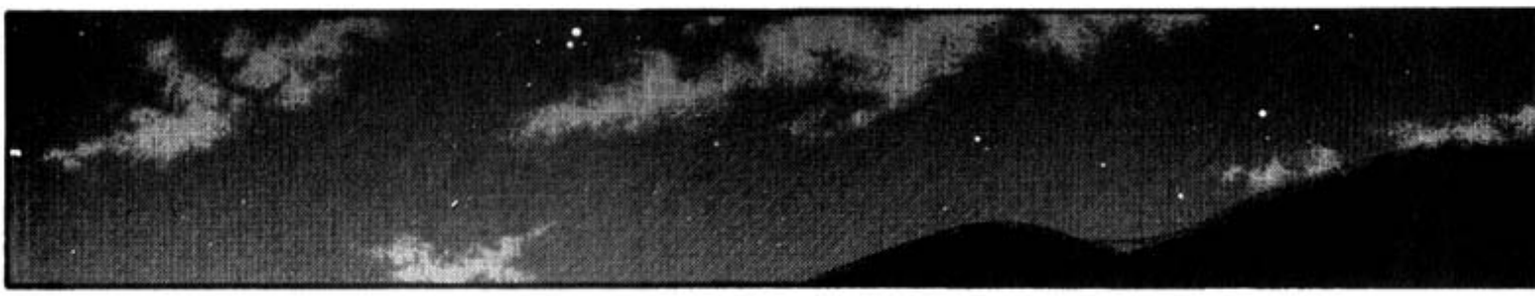
MAY SHE HAVE A HAPPY LIVE.

OTSU...
...YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE...


...I ENJOYED SPENDING TIME WITH YOU.

...ACTUALLY...





HM!?

...

...DID I FALL ASLEEP?
...

THE DAY'S DONE!?
...
...

HUH...
HOW ABSURD!
WHAT AM I ANYWAY!?
HA!
I SURVIVED ONE MORE DAY.
HA!
HA HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!
HA HA HA HA!

I'M NOTHING.

IF I'M DESTINED TO DIE...
THEN THAT'S ALL RIGHT TOO.

I'M BLESSED.

INSHUN OF HŌZŌIN IS THE STRONGEST OPPONENT I'VE EVER ENCOUNTERED.
NOT BAD FOR WHAT COULD BE MY FINAL FIGHT.
YES.

HM!?
MUSASHI!!
YOU'RE STILL HERE!!

!!
FORGIVE ME.
I OVERSLEPT.
I'M SORRY, INSHUN.
HM...
SEE, MASTER, HE DIDN'T RUN AWAY!!
SEE, AGON!!
HA HA HA HA!

KRIK
KRIK
WHAT NERVE... HE WAS ASLEEP!?
IS HE FEARLESS OR JUST AN IDIOT?
HM
TUGG
HM
TUGG
FUP

THE HŌZŌIN CROSS-SHAPED SPEAR, INHERITED FROM MASTER IN'EI.

THIS SHALL BE MY WEAPON...
...AGREED?

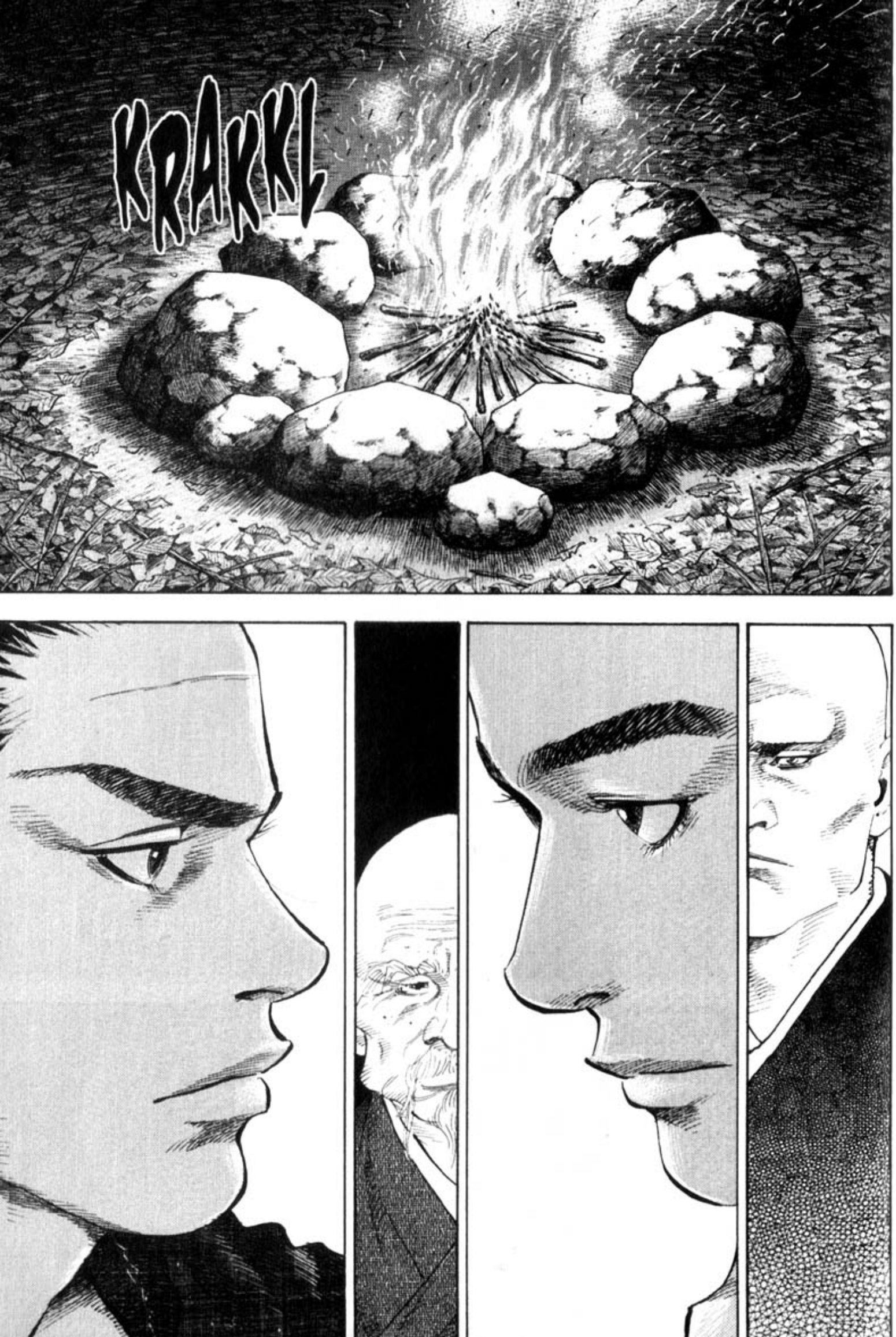
HRMPH.

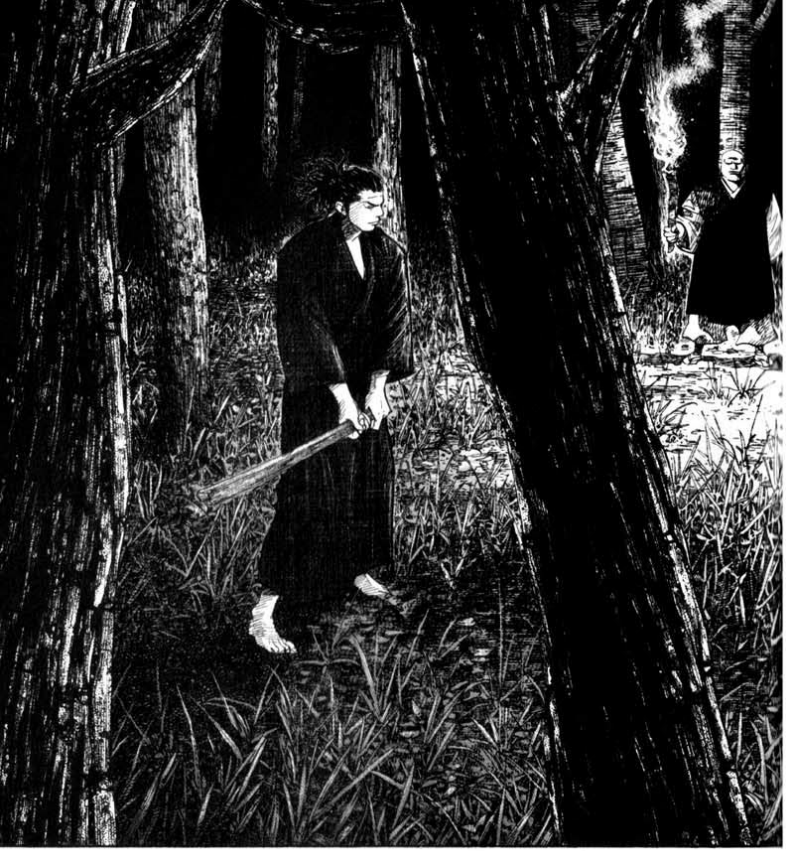
FINE.
WELL, THEN...

IT LOOKS AS IF YOU'RE READY.
KRICH
COME!!
KRICH

Vagabond

(DA DA DA DA: RUNNING SOUND EFFECTS.)


KRAKKL

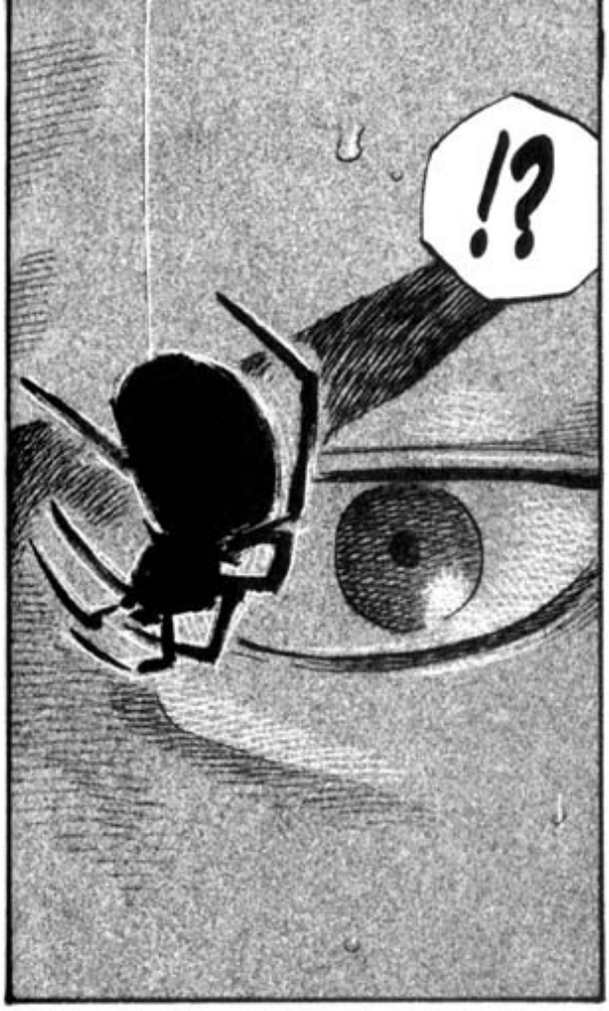


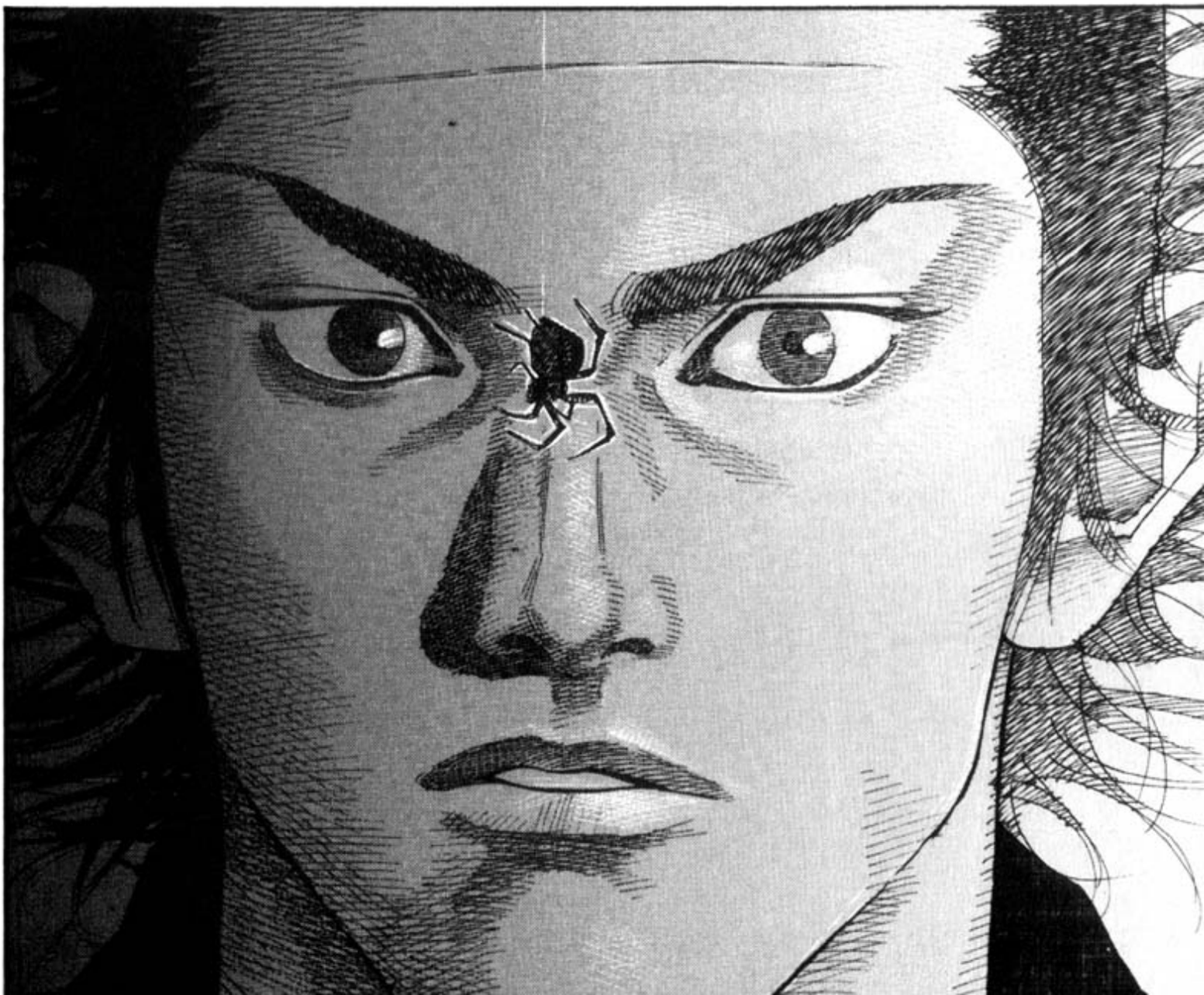
#63 Spider's Thread

!!

SHOULD YOU DIE...
...WHERE SHALL I TAKE YOUR BONES?

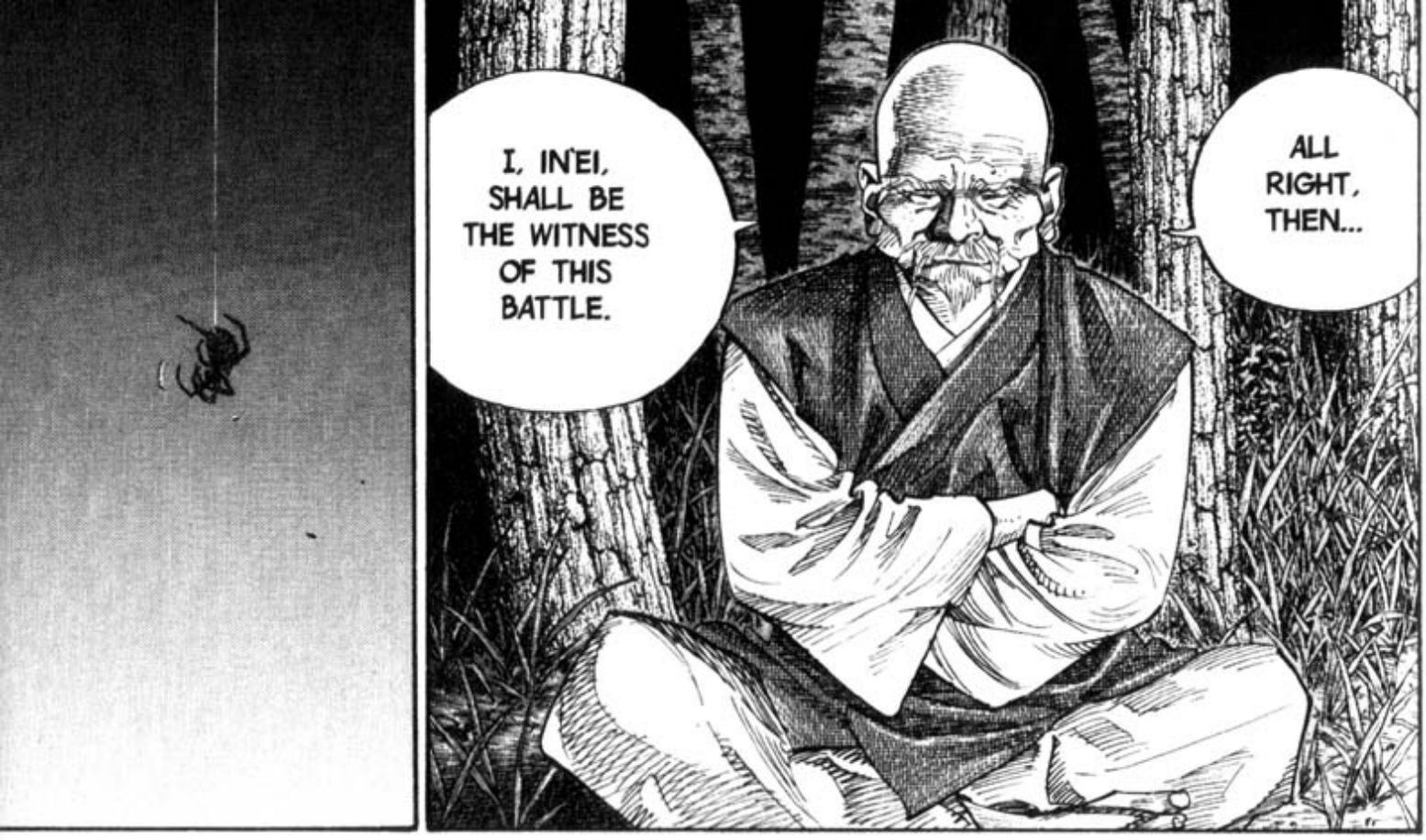
...THEN I MUST ACCEPT IT.
IF THAT'S MY FATE...
THMP THMP
I WILL ACCEPT IT.
THMP THMP
FCH
FCH
FCH
MY BONES...
DEATH...





MY BONES...
BURY THEM RIGHT HERE.

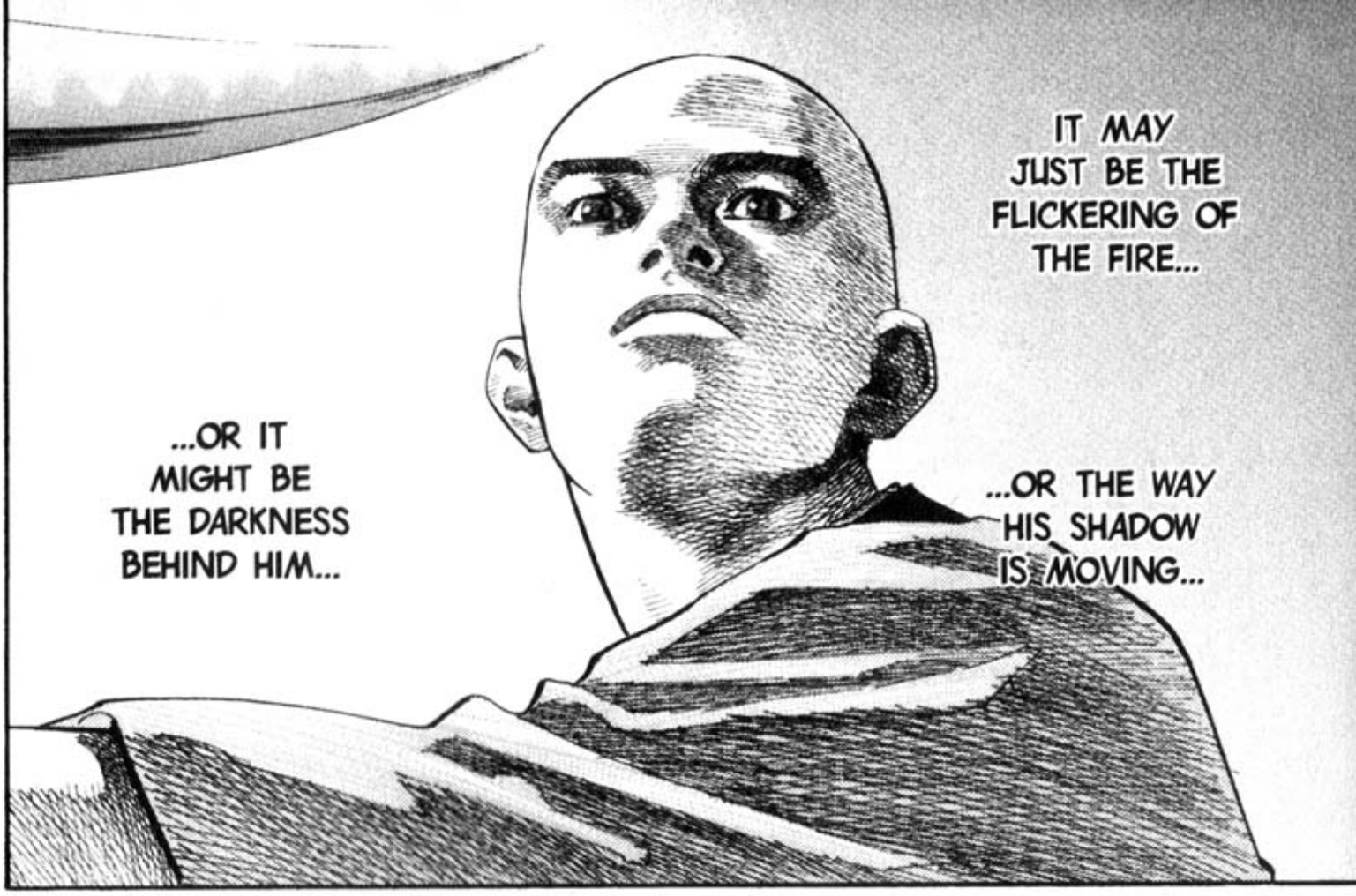
HMM...


I, IN'EI, SHALL BE THE WITNESS OF THIS BATTLE.
ALL RIGHT, THEN...

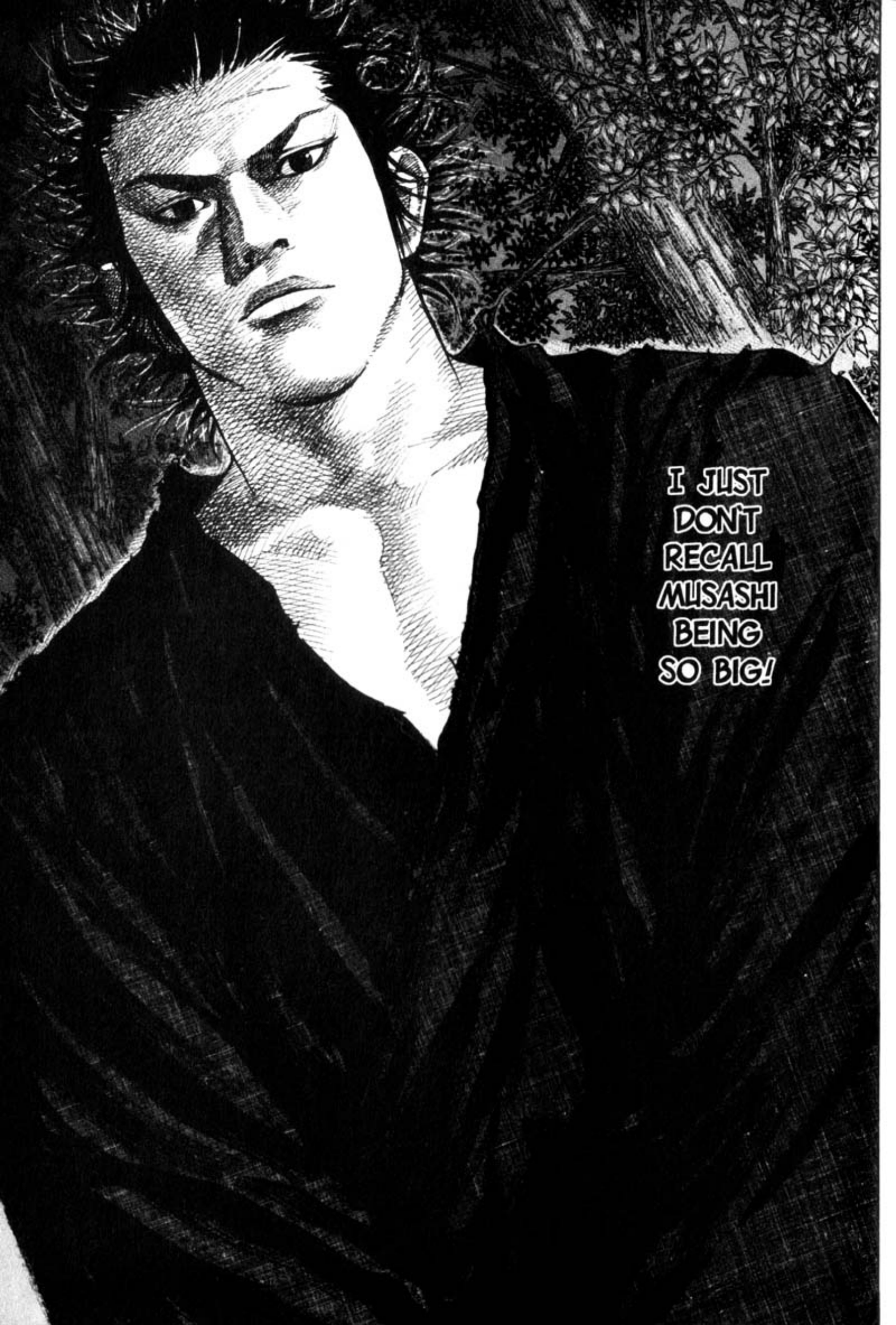
YOU MAY BEGIN...
KRICH!

HE'S JUST A MAN...
INSHIJIN IS JUST A MAN...

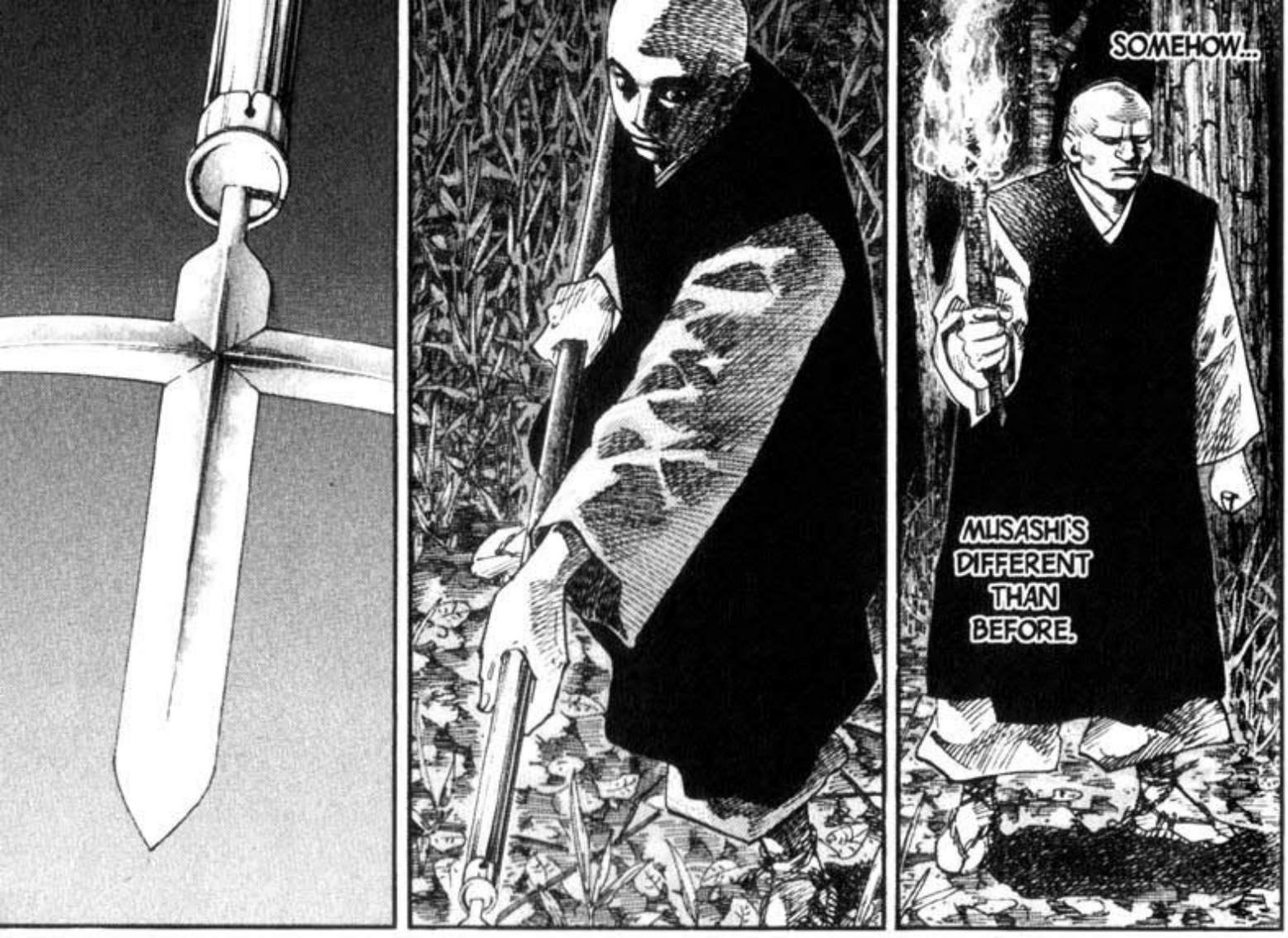
THE BRUTISH RAGE HE USED TO PROJECT...
HE'S MANAGING TO KEEP IT CONTAINED...
HMM...
THIS IS A SURPRISE.
THAT GRACELESS BLOOD-THIRST IS GONE.
KRK

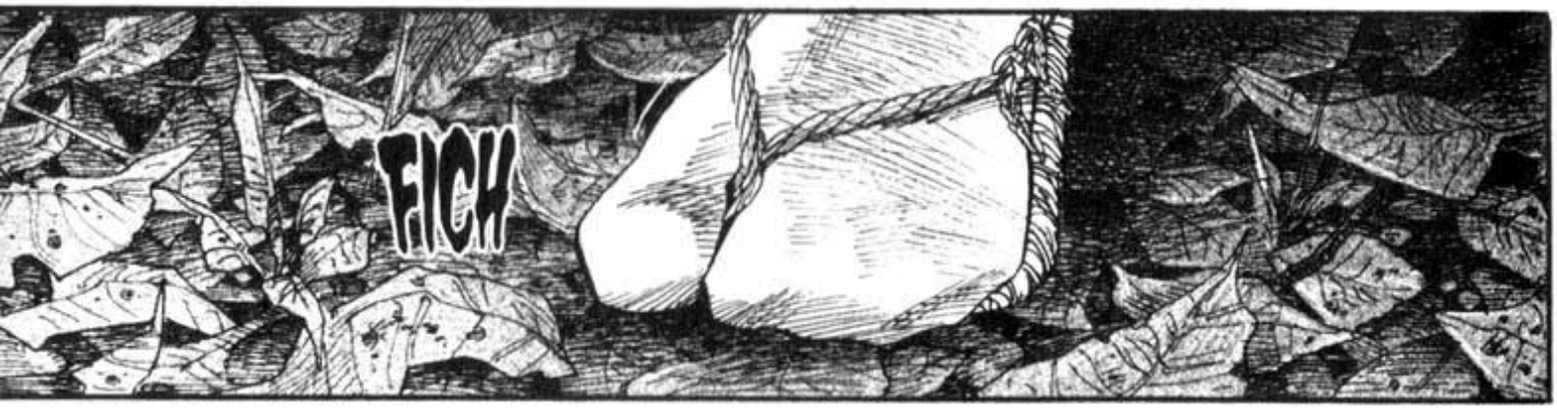

IT MAY JUST BE THE FLICKERING OF THE FIRE...
...OR IT MIGHT BE THE DARKNESS BEHIND HIM...
...OR THE WAY HIS SHADOW IS MOVING...

FICH


I JUST DON'T RECALL MUSASHI BEING SO BIG!

HE'S HUGE.


SOMEHOW...
MUSASHI'S DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE.


FICH

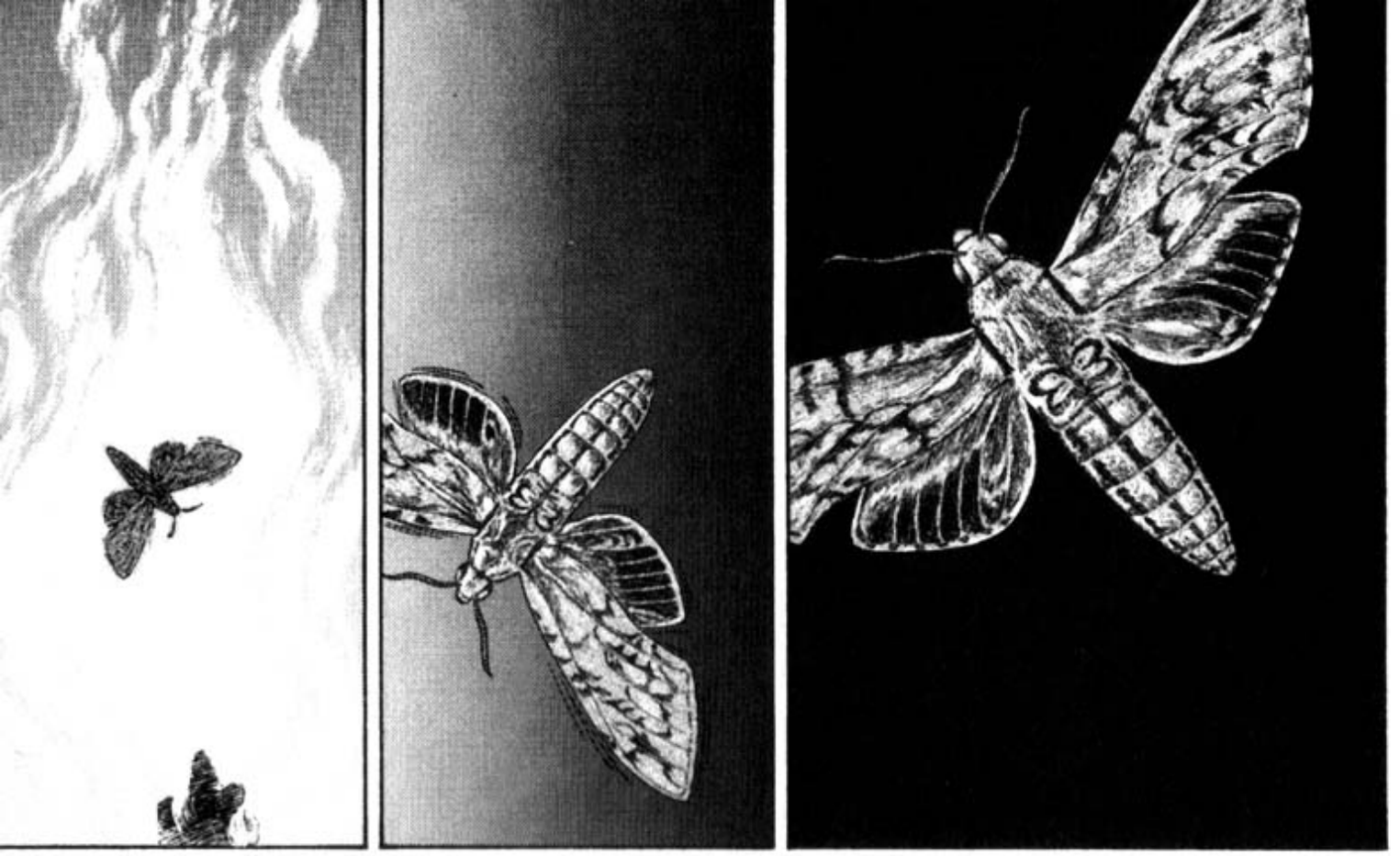
DON'T EVEN BLINK...
AGON...
YES...?

WHOEVER WINS, IT'LL BE OVER IN AN INSTANT...

!!

Vagabond

(I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO BLINK!?)

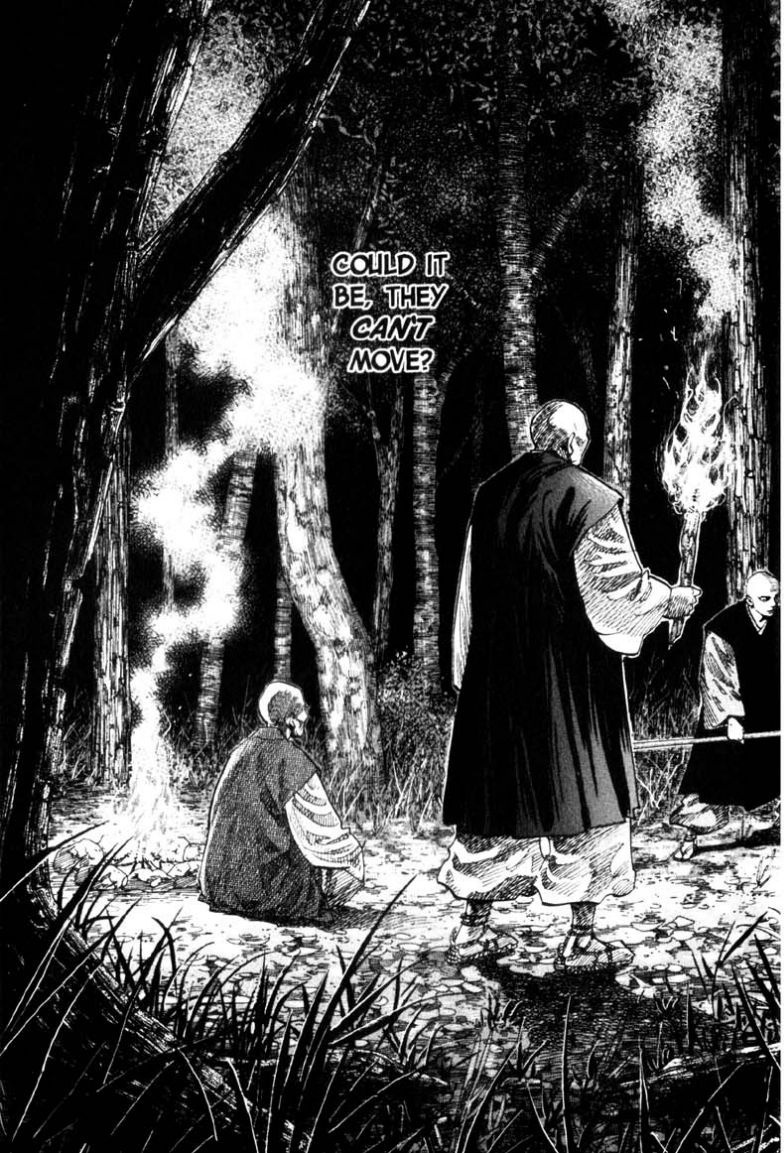


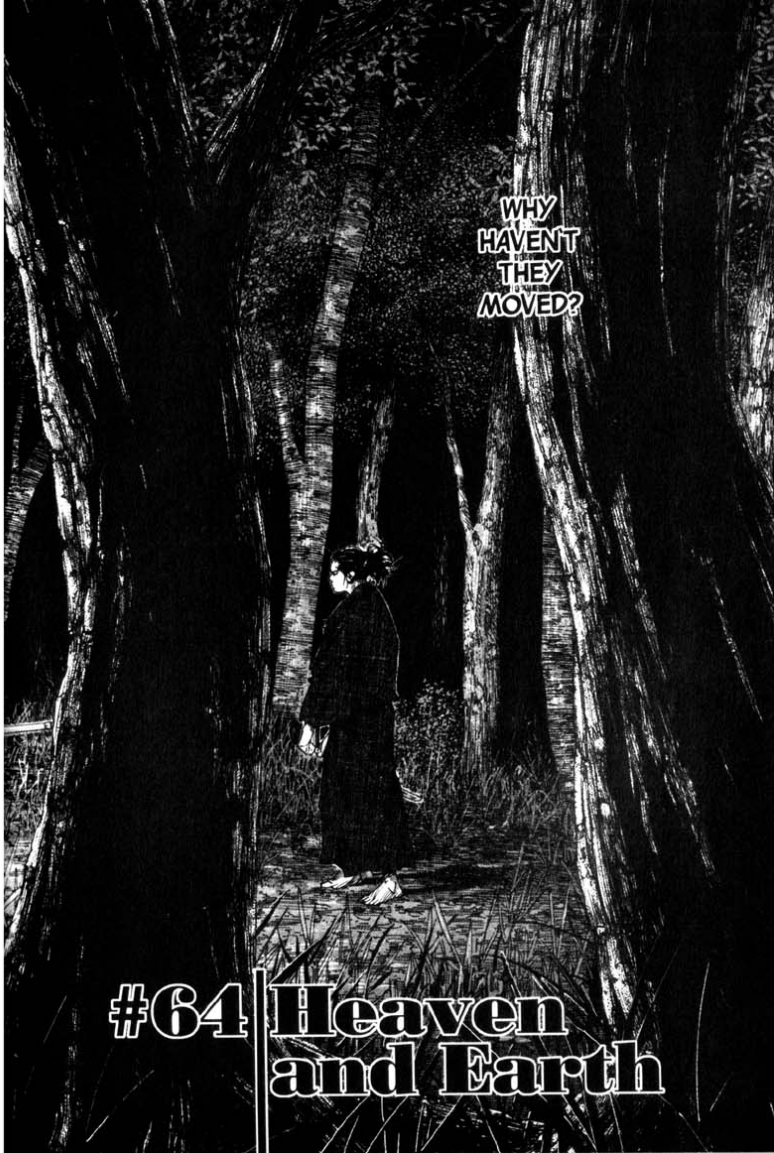
FWIP

...

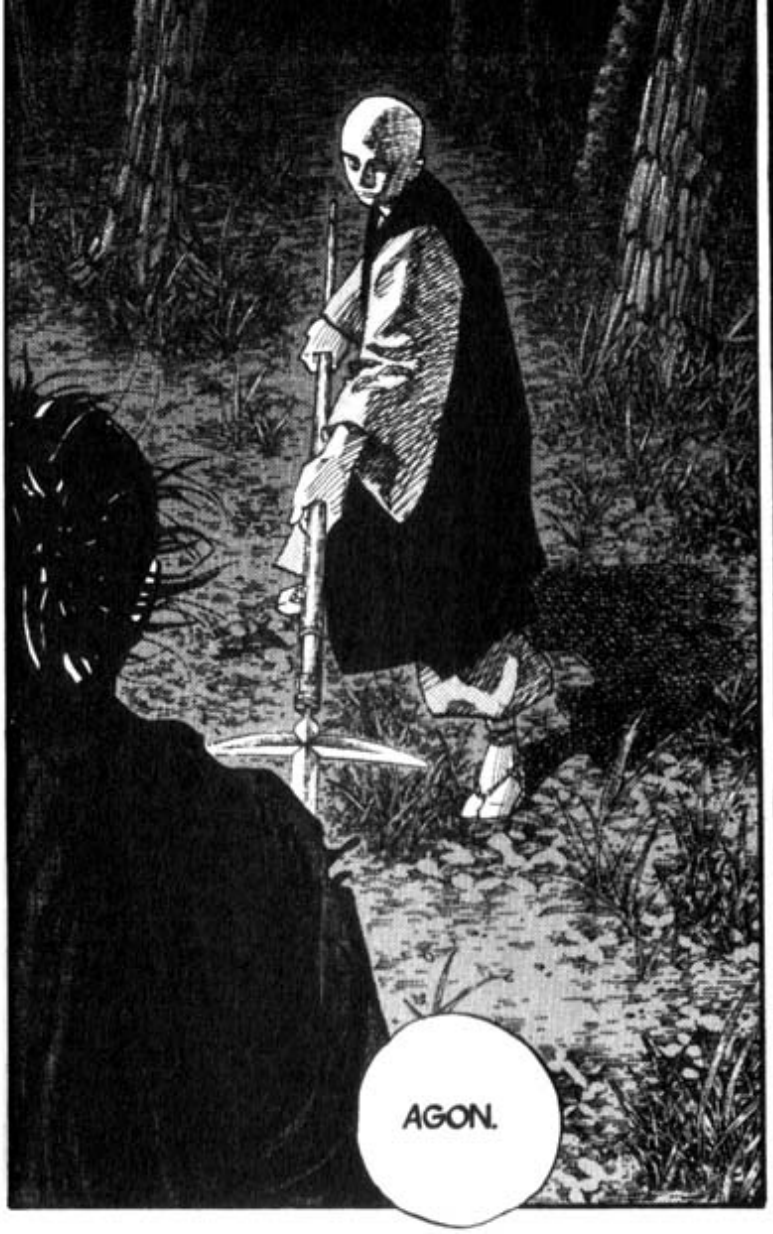
HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED?

YES, MASTER.
UN-NECESSARY CRUELTY.





#64 Heaven and Earth


AGON.

I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY MUSASHI'S FROZEN UP...
FACING INSHUN THE LAST TIME HAS FOREVER SCORCHED FEAR INTO HIS MEMORY.
THAT IS OBVIOUS.

BUT WHY WON'T INSHUN MAKE A MOVE...?

HRMPH...

THIS FIGHT...

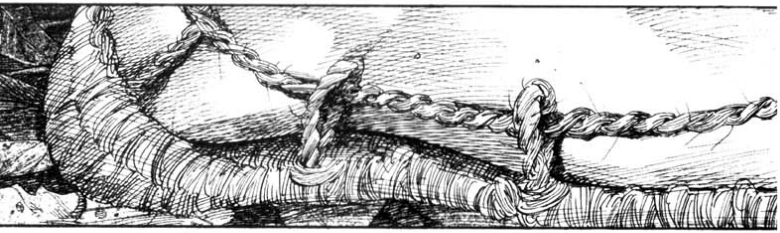
MUST A FIGHT ALWAYS BE SO CONSPICUOUS?
MASTER ?

IT'S A CONTEST OF WILLS...
THEIR SOULS ARE INTER-LOCKED...
...TRYING TO GAIN THE UPPER HAND.

HFF...
HFF...

HFF...
HFF...
HFF...

KRICH



KRICH

Fp
Fp
Fp
HMM...
Fp
Fp
I'M SO EXCITED, I HAVE GOOSE-BUMPS!
MUSASHI!

INTERESTING...
MUSASHI IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
HFF...
HFF...
LOOKS LIKE I'VE ROUSED A SLEEPING TIGER.

FWOOSH

THE HOZOIN CROSS-SHAPED SPEAR.
NOT USED TO THAT WEAPON...

Tp

MUSTN'T GET DISTRACTED.

SEE EVERY-
THING IN ITS
ENTIRETY,
EFFORTLESSLY.
THAT IS
WHAT IT
MEANS TO
TRULY "SEE."

...!!

ONCE YOUR
HEART IS
PREOCCUPIED...
...YOUR
SWORD
WILL NOT
BE TRUE.

HFF.
HFF.
HFF.

BENEATH THE VASTNESS OF THESE STARRY HEAVENS...

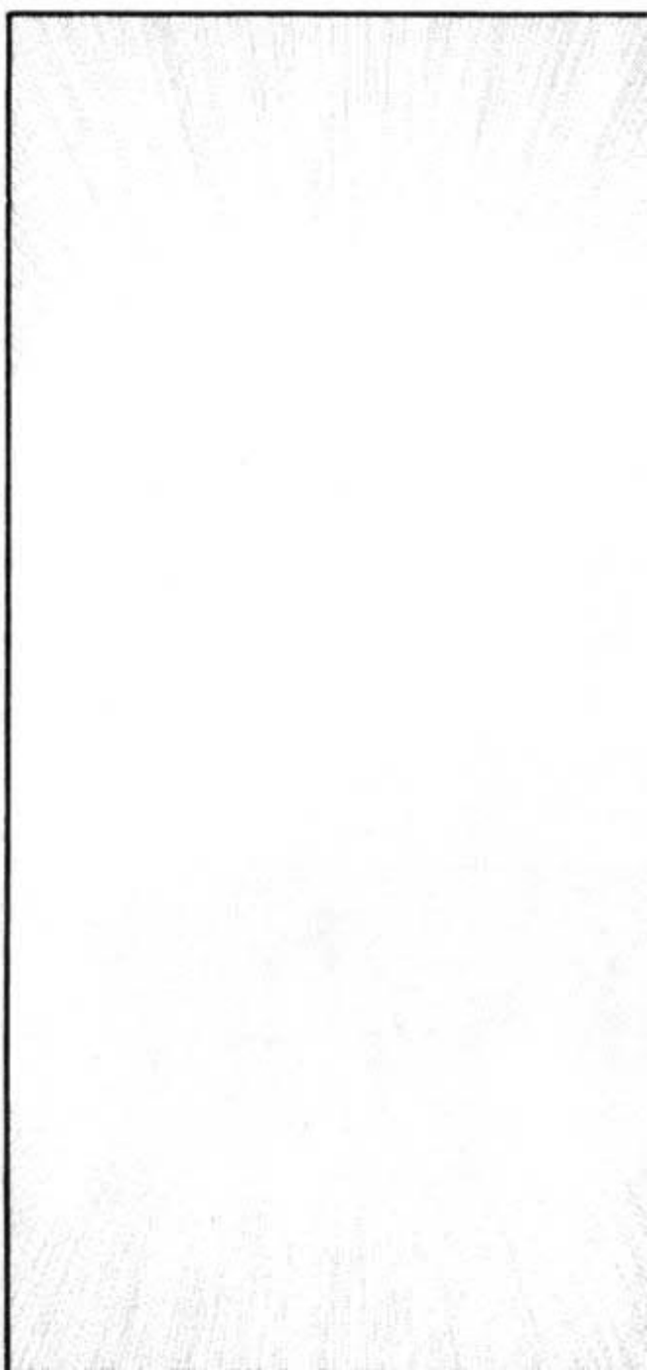
KRICH

...INSHLIN AND I, BOTH, ARE INSIGNIFICANT.

WHY DO YOU RETREAT?
INSHUN...

...

KRKKL



"AS THE FOUR SEASONS BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH FLOW IN AN ENDLESS CYCLE...
SIR?
HEAVEN AND EARTH...
"SO TOO, MUST MAN WORK HIS WAY...
"...THROUGH HIS OWN CYCLE OF SEASONS CONTINUOUS."

SIR...?
HAH!
...SEASONS...
...CONTINUOUS...
HRMPH.
HEH
HEH!
THE
TEACHINGS
OF MY OWN
MASTER.
HE'S STILL
SO YOUNG.
INSHUN
...
MASTER
IN'EI...
YOUR
MASTER
!?
HRMPH
...

WHY HAVEN'T I NOTICED THAT BEFORE NOW?

...INVIGORATED WITH STRENGTH RENEWED...
...A FRESH NEW SPRING IS SURE TO FOLLOW...
IF YOU ARE ABLE TO ENDURE A LONG HARD WINTER...

IT SEEMS YOU HAVE SURVIVED THE LATEST WINTER OF YOUR TRAINING...
WELL, MUSASHI...

Vagabond

(STOP WITH THE FLASHBACKS.)

A SMILE...?
HOW COULD MUSASHI BE SO CONFIDENT?
I DON'T UNDER-STAND.
HMPH...
MUSTN'T LET MYSELF GET INTIMIDATED...

WAIT A MINUTE...
WAIT...
...!!

I'VE BEEN SEEKING OUT THE MOST FORMIDABLE OPPONENT I COULD FIND...

...AND I FEEL THAT I'M VERY CLOSE TO ACHIEVING PERFECTION...
I HAVE NO FEARS...

A FIGHT SO INTENSE, IT BRINGS ME TO THE BRINK OF DEATH.

THE ONE THING I LACK...

...IS THE EXPERIENCE OF MORTAL COMBAT.

AN ENEMY SO STRONG I MUST RISK EVERYTHING I HAVE.

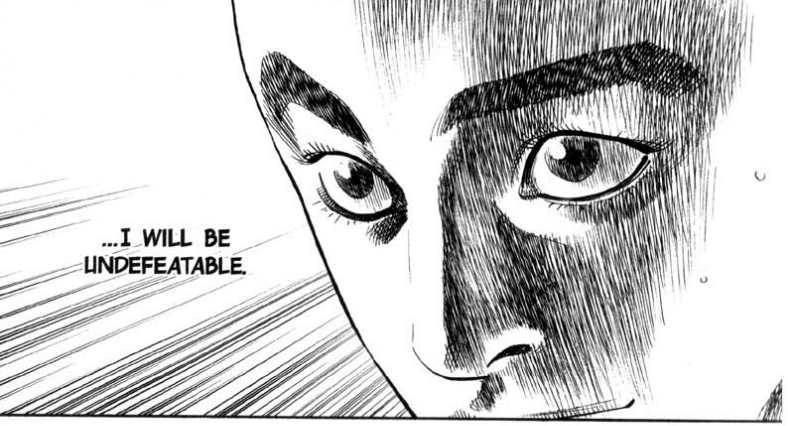
THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SEEKING OUT.

SUCH INTENSITY...

THIS IS NOT THE MUSASHI I FACED BEFORE.

IF YOU INDEED HAVE DEVELOPED INTO A FORMIDABLE OPPONENT...

...THEN I OWE YOU MY GRATITUDE!!

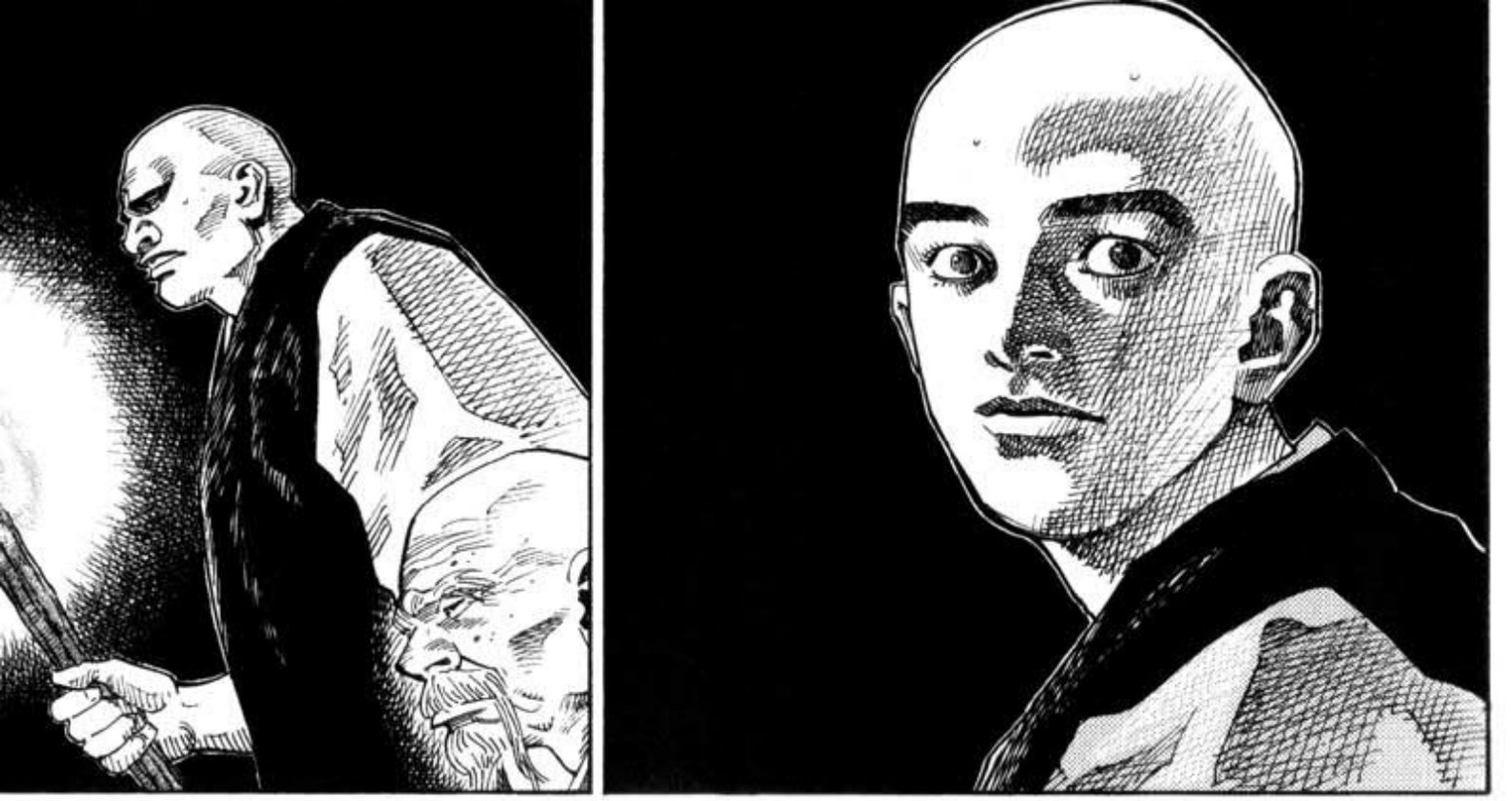

...I WILL BE UNDEFEATABLE.

#65 Legacy

AFTER THIS FIGHT...

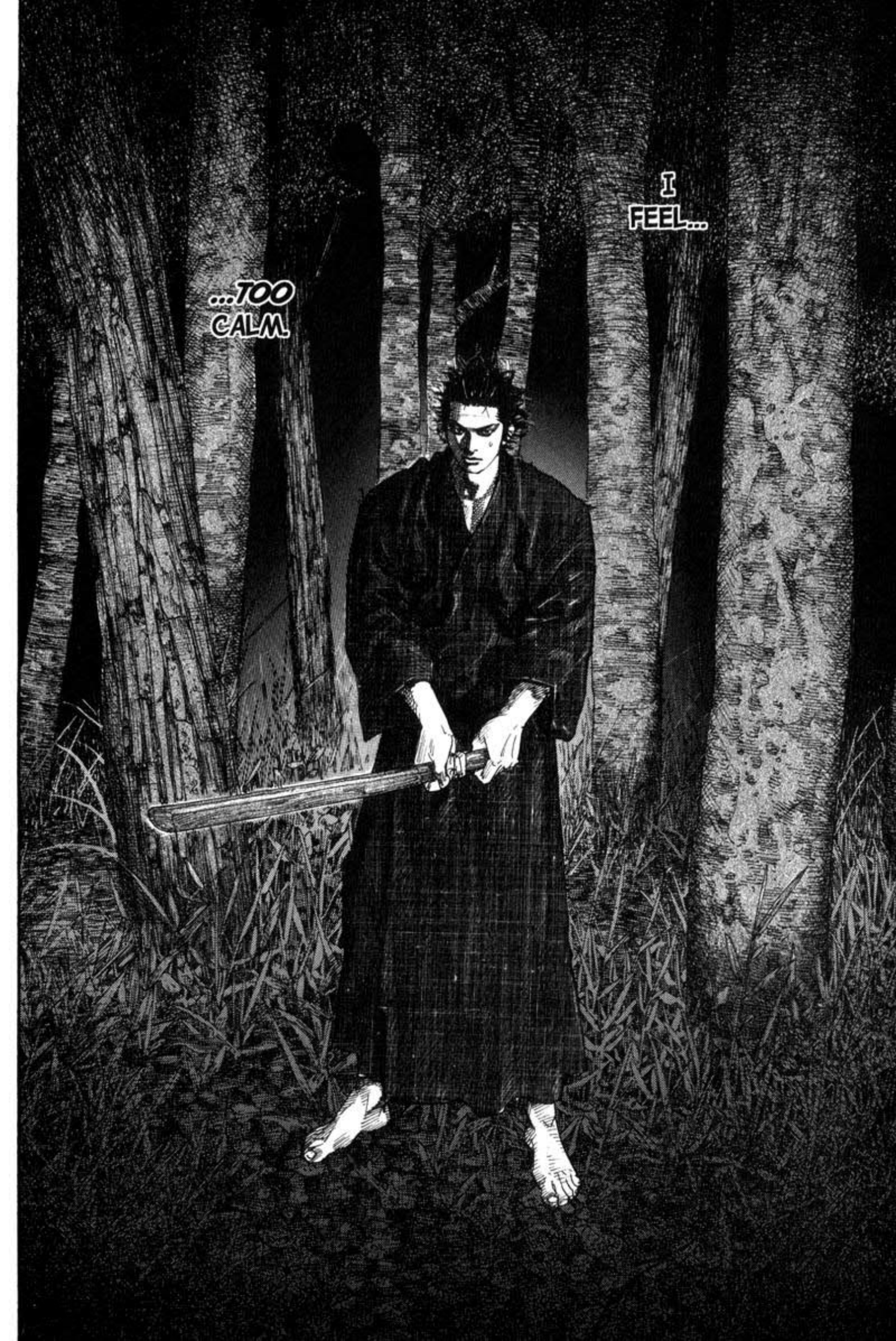
YAHHH!!

SHUF
!!
KRICH



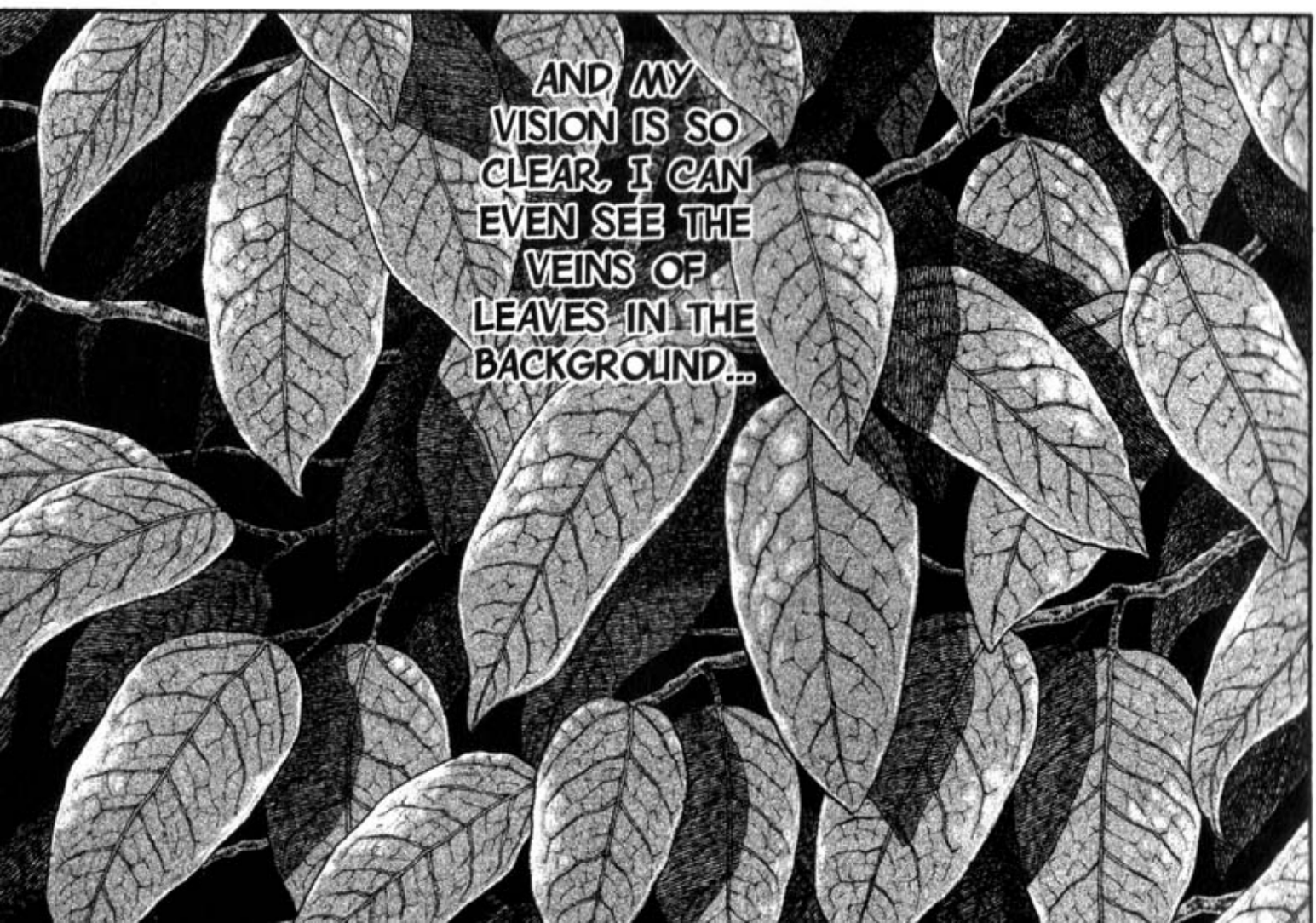
I CAN SEE...

BUT...
WHY DO I FEEL...?
EVERYTHING, DOWN TO THE MOVEMENT OF HIS LONG EYELASHES...
I CAN SEE EVERYTHING, CLEARLY.


I
FEEL...
...TOO
CALM.

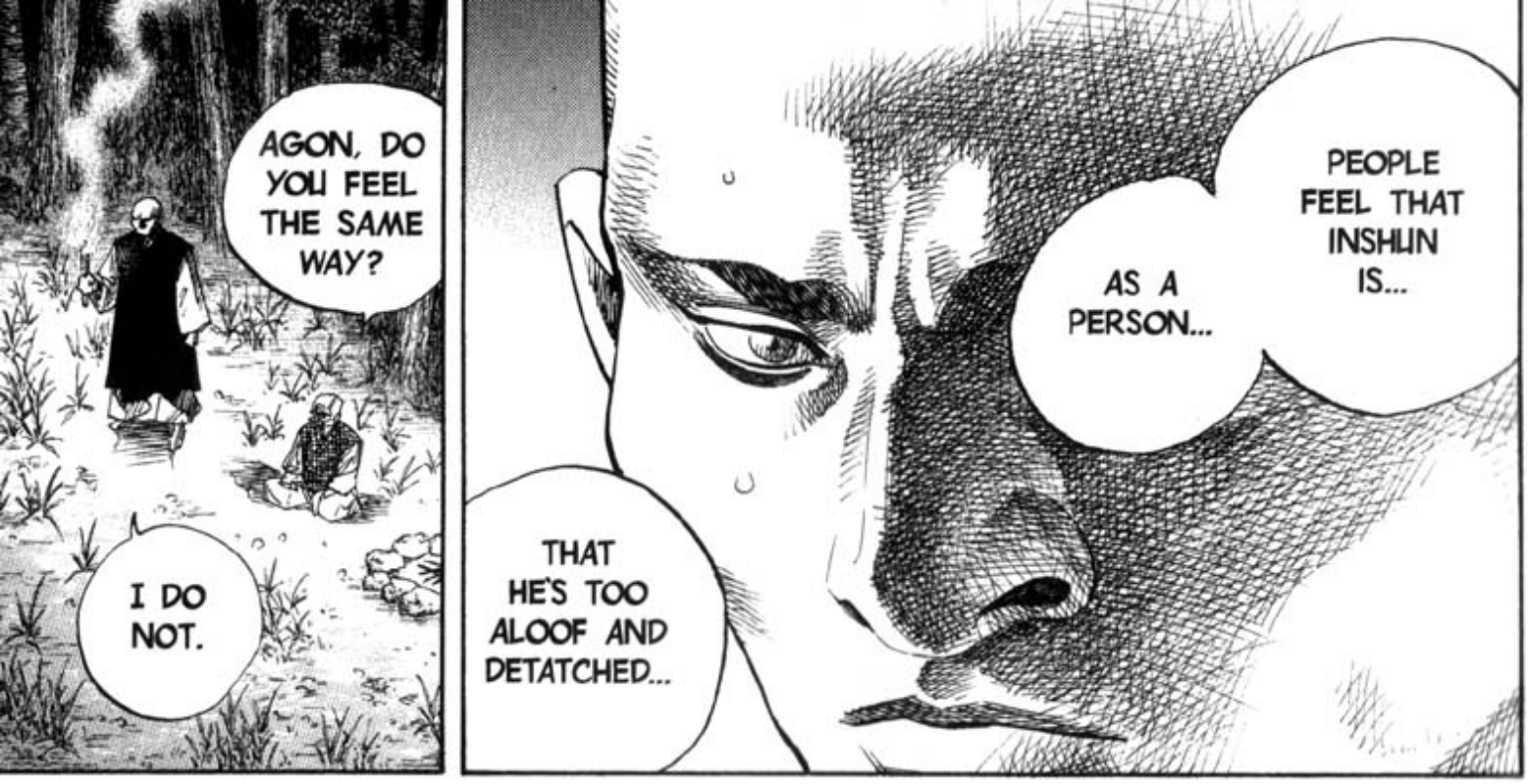
I'M IN MORTAL DANGER. SHOULD I BE FEELING LIKE THIS?
I'M FACING THE MOST POWERFUL OPPONENT I'VE EVER KNOWN...

...SO CALM.
I FEEL...


AND MY VISION IS SO CLEAR, I CAN EVEN SEE THE VEINS OF LEAVES IN THE BACKGROUND...

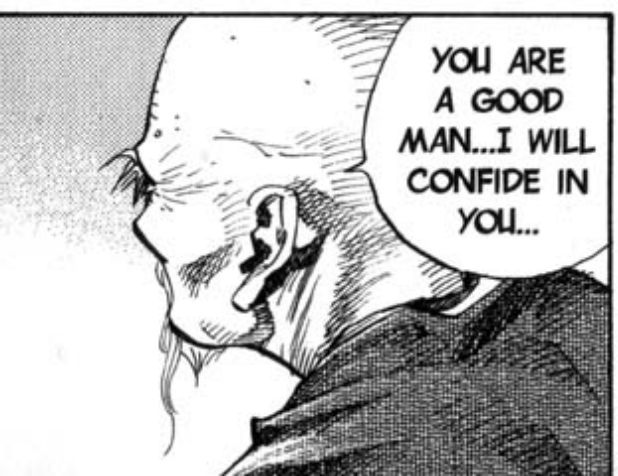
GULP
MASTER INEI... MAY I INQUIRE...?
WHY DID YOU TAKE MUSASHI ON AS A DISCIPLE?
KRKKL
FWP
...
HE'S TOTALLY VULNERABLE...
...AND YET HE LEAVES NOTHING OPEN...

MASTER, THIS MAY NOT BE AN APPROPRIATE TIME...
BUT SOME OF THE DISCIPLES ARE NOT CONFIDENT IN INSHUN'S ABILITIES AS THE SECOND GENERATION MASTER OF HŌZŌIN...
...
A DISCIPLE, HE IS NOT...
BUT...
...YOU TRAINED HIM!!
YOU TRAINED A MAN TO DEFEAT INSHUN!
WHY, SIR!?
MYŌEI...
HE KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL HOW INFERIOR HE IS TO INSHUN.
MASTER IN'EI, YOUR HEART IS OPEN TO US. YOU ARE GENEROUS AND KIND. BUT INSHUN, HE IS--
DON'T COMPARE US.
BUT SIR...
WHAT IS IT?
HRMPH!
BUT...
...


AGON, DO YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY?
I DO NOT.
THAT HE'S TOO ALOOF AND DETATCHED...
AS A PERSON...
PEOPLE FEEL THAT INSHUN IS...

AND WITH THE RUMORS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN TRAINING MUSASHI FOR THIS DUEL...
MANY DISCIPLES ARE DISCONTENT.
IT FOSTERS FEAR AND JEALOUSY IN THE OTHERS...
BUT INSHUN'S REMOTENESS...

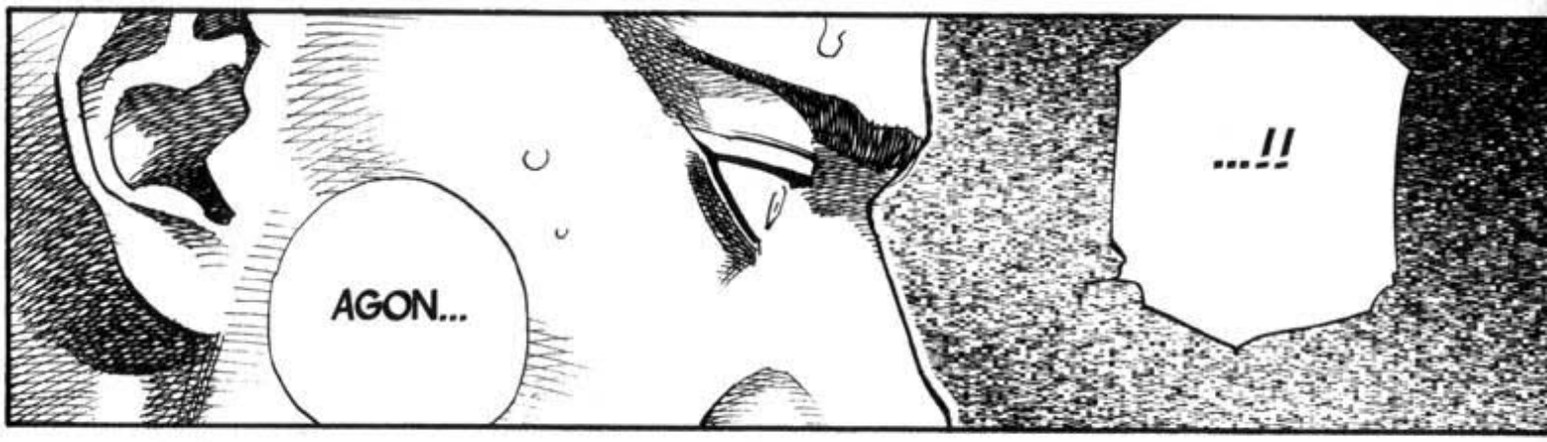
AGON...


YOU ARE A GOOD MAN...I WILL CONFIDE IN YOU...

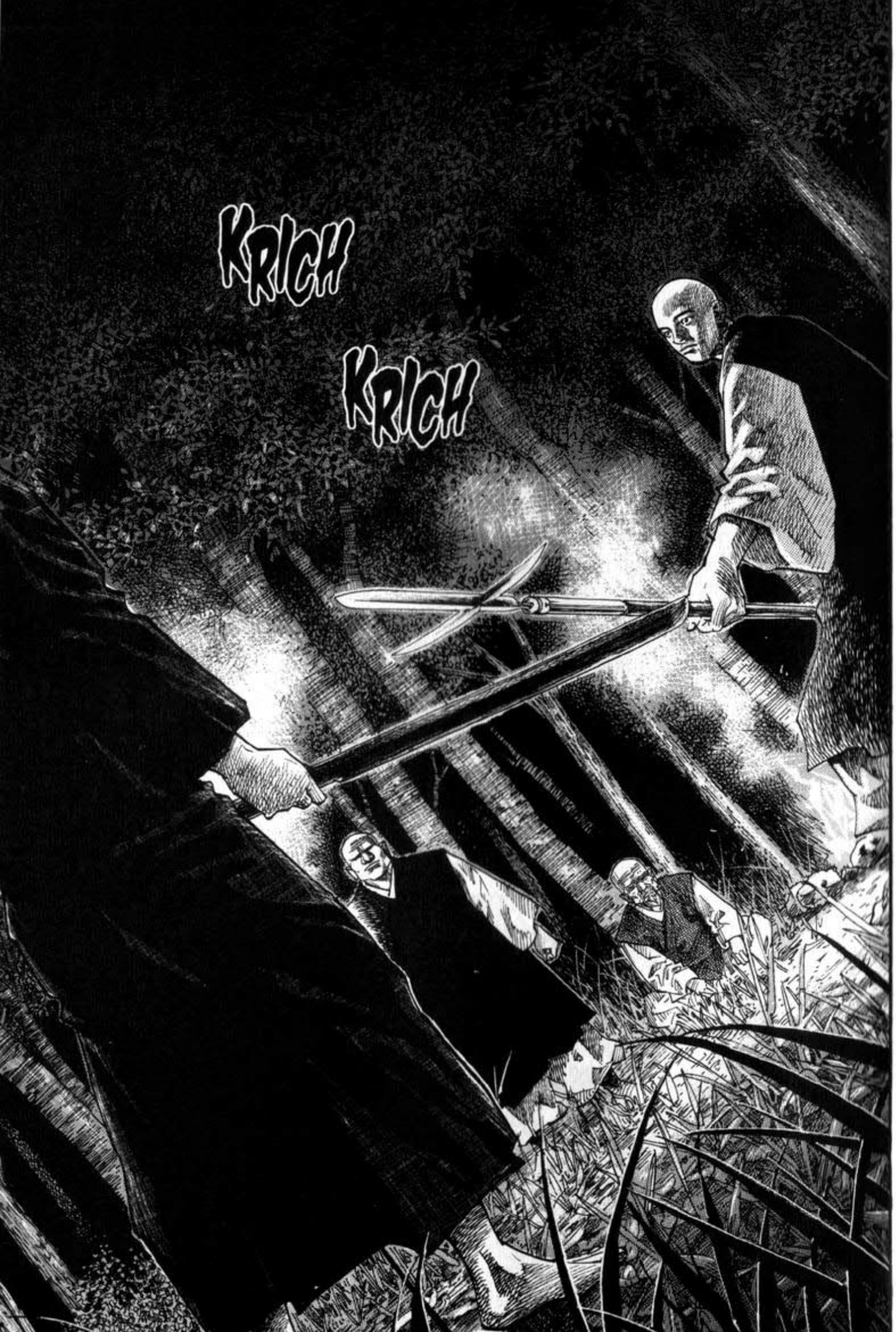
YOUR BLABBERING...
IT'S DISTRACTING ME FROM THE DUEL.

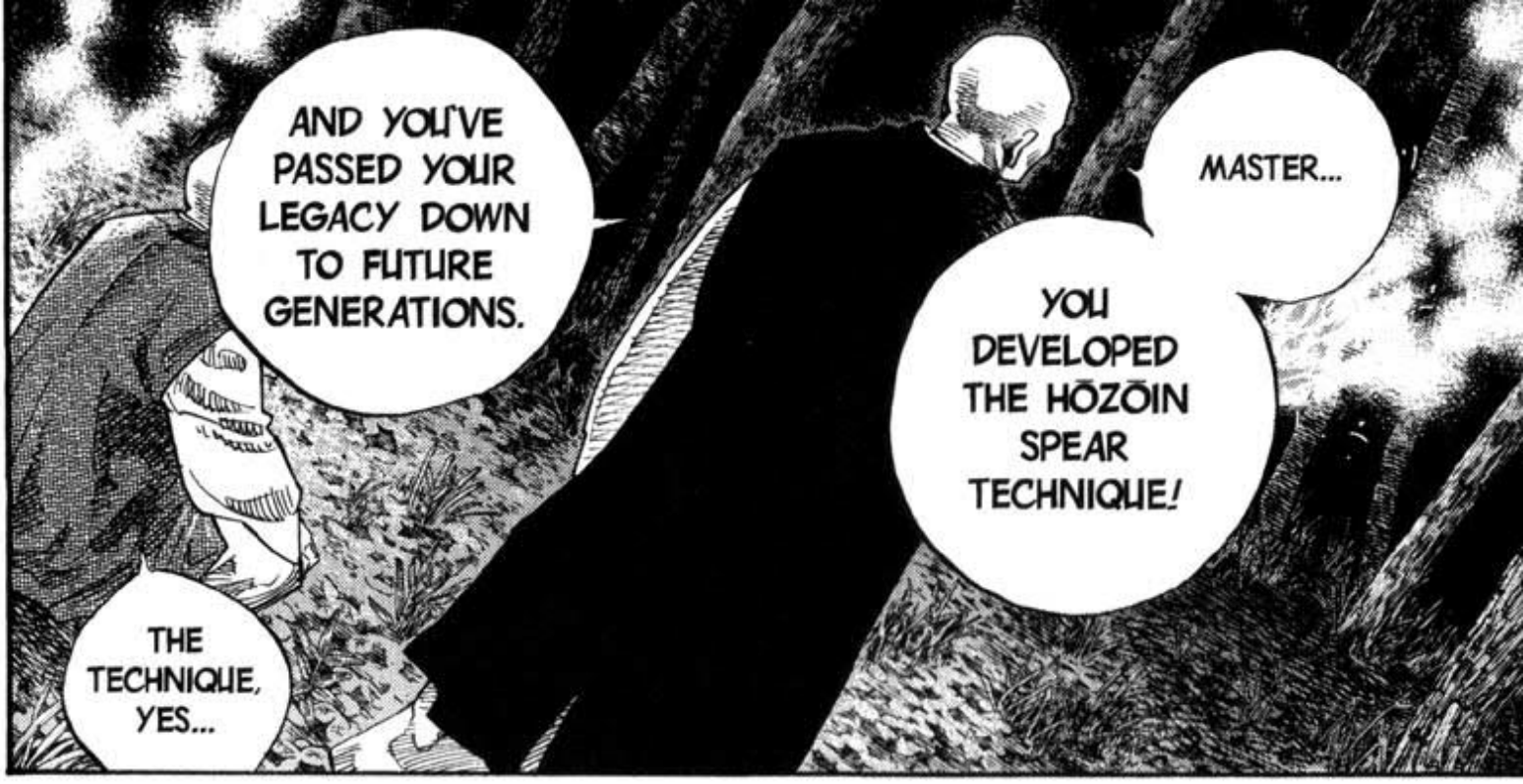
IT'S STIRRED UP MYŌEI AND THE OTHERS EVEN MORE...
THE DISCIPLES ARE VERY CONFUSED...!

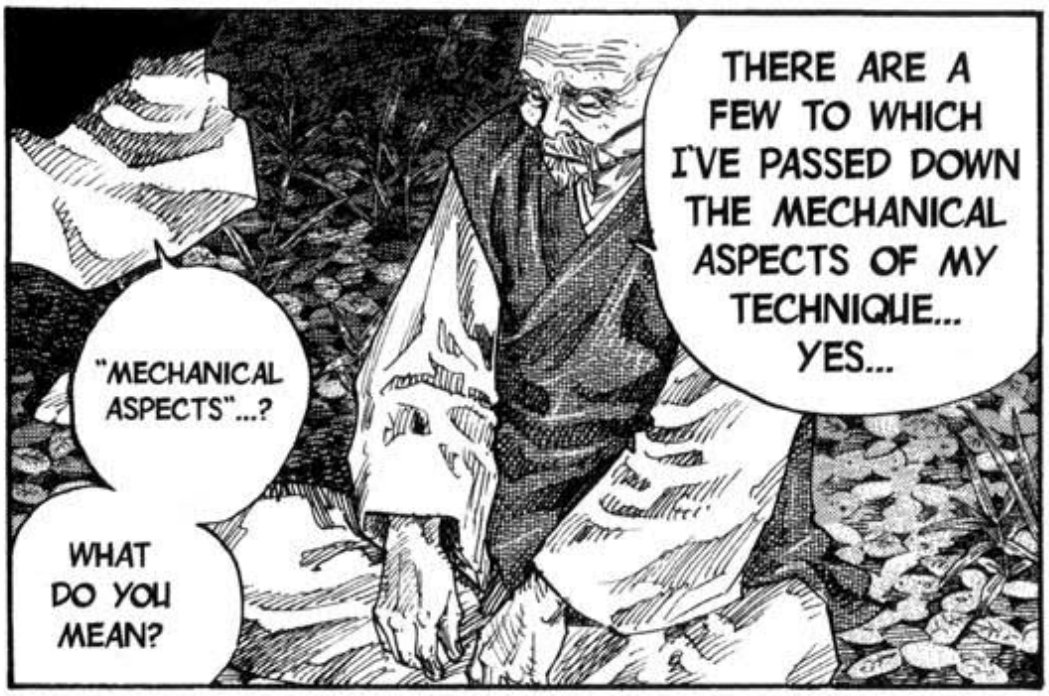
I'VE NOT MUCH TIME LEFT IN THIS WORLD.


AGON...
...!!

BUT TO WHAT END? FOR WHAT REASON WAS I BORN?
I, HŌZŌIN KAKUZENBŌ IN'EI, WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD...
LET ME ASK YOU...


KRICH
KRICH


AND YOU'VE PASSED YOUR LEGACY DOWN TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.
MASTER...
YOU DEVELOPED THE HŌZŌIN SPEAR TECHNIQUE!
THE TECHNIQUE, YES...


THERE ARE A FEW TO WHICH I'VE PASSED DOWN THE MECHANICAL ASPECTS OF MY TECHNIQUE... YES...
"MECHANICAL ASPECTS"...?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

MASTER ...?

I HAVEN'T PASSED ON THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO INSHUN...

HMM...
AS MY BODY WEAKENS, I'VE COME TO REALIZE...

THE LEGACY THAT A MASTER MUST PASS ON TO HIS SUCCESSOR...
IT STILL REMAINS INSIDE HERE.
THMP
I WILL NOT DIE UNTIL I'VE PASSED IT ON TO HIM.
I CAN NOT!

MASTER IN'EI.
MASTER IN'EI!

KRICH

YAGYŪ MUNEYOSHI HAS ARRIVED, SIR!!

HM...

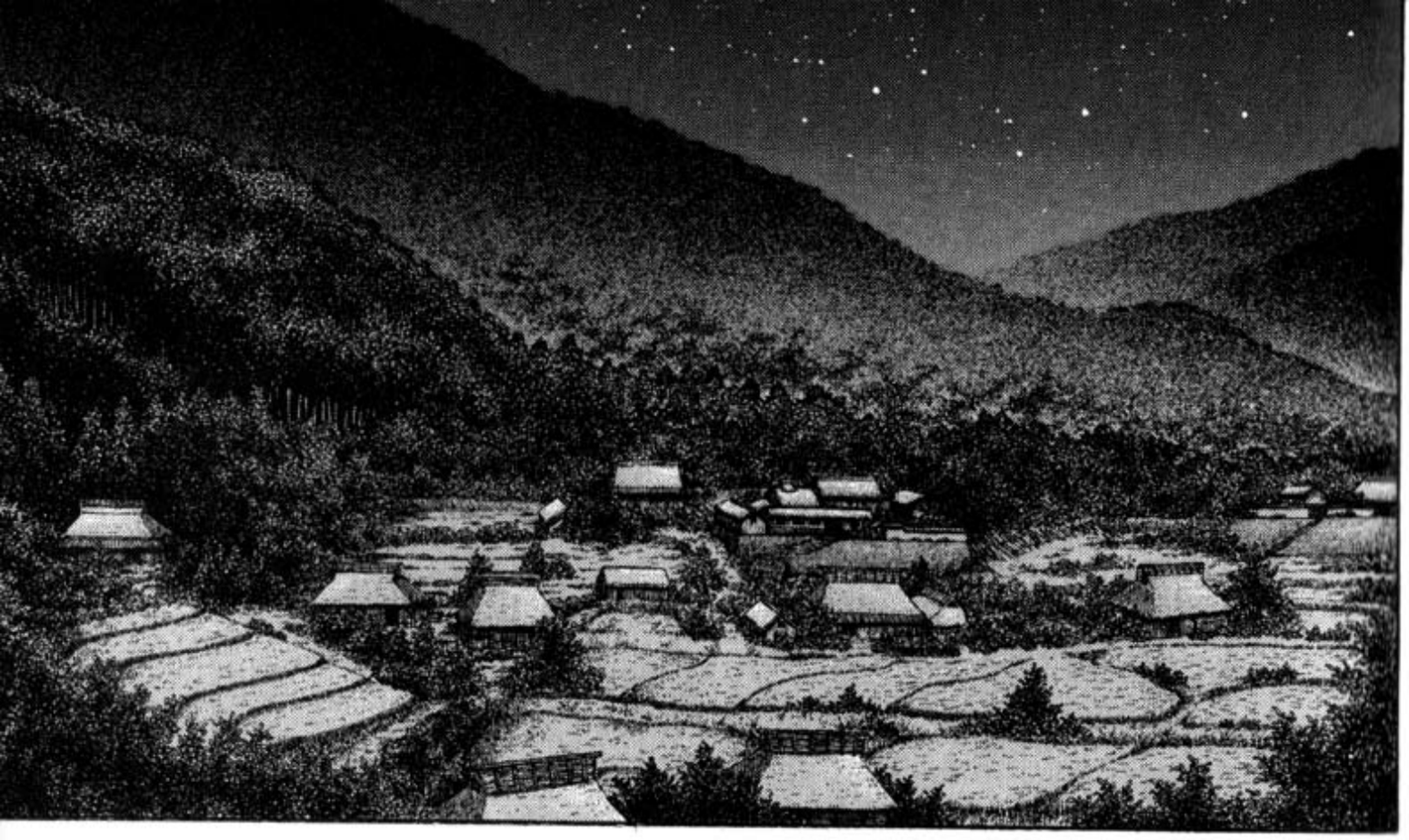
...
KAMI'IZUMI ISE NO KAMI WILL ALSO BE ARRIVING MOMENTARILY, SIR.

KOFF
KOFF

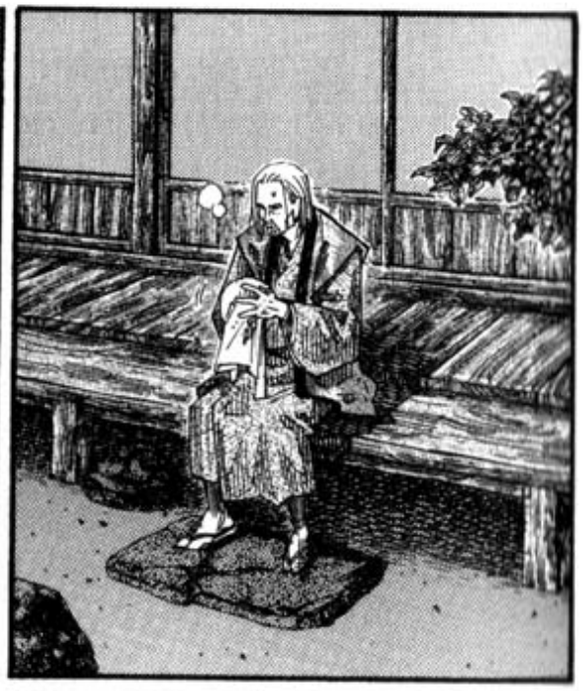
THE MASTER SWORDSMAN!

KAMI'IZUMI ISE NO KAMI!!

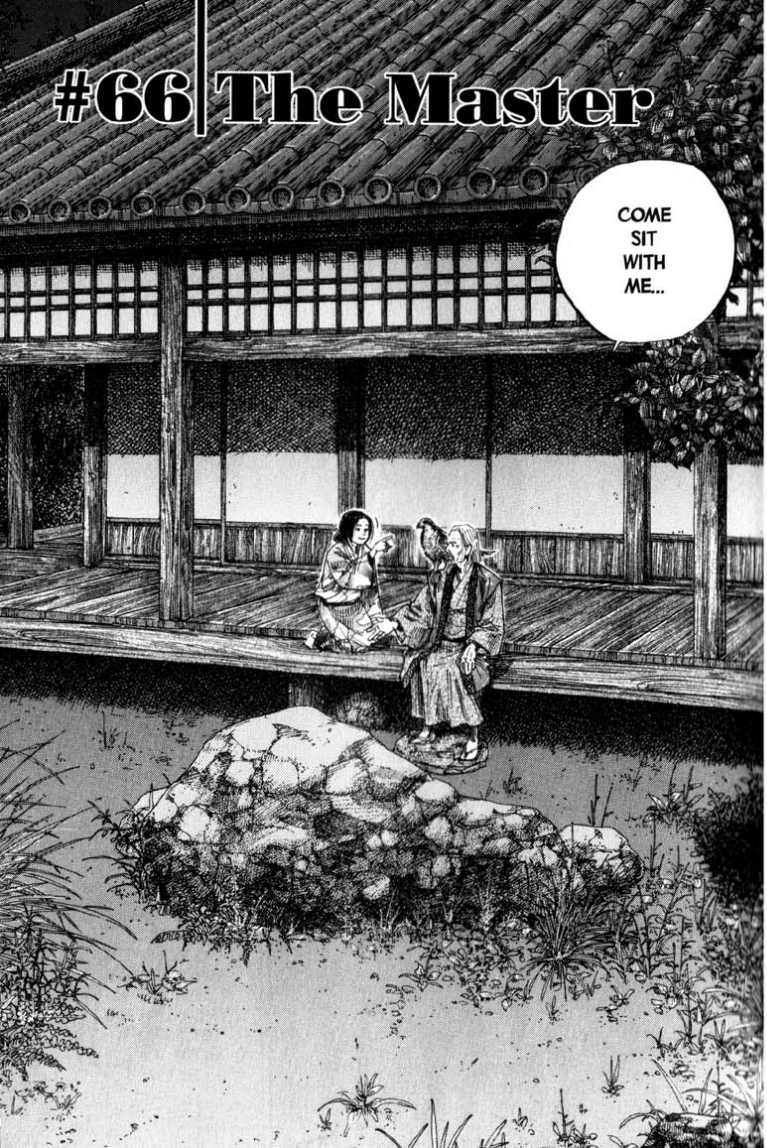
KOFF.
...
KLNCH



76 YEARS...
I'VE LIVED A LONG LIFE...

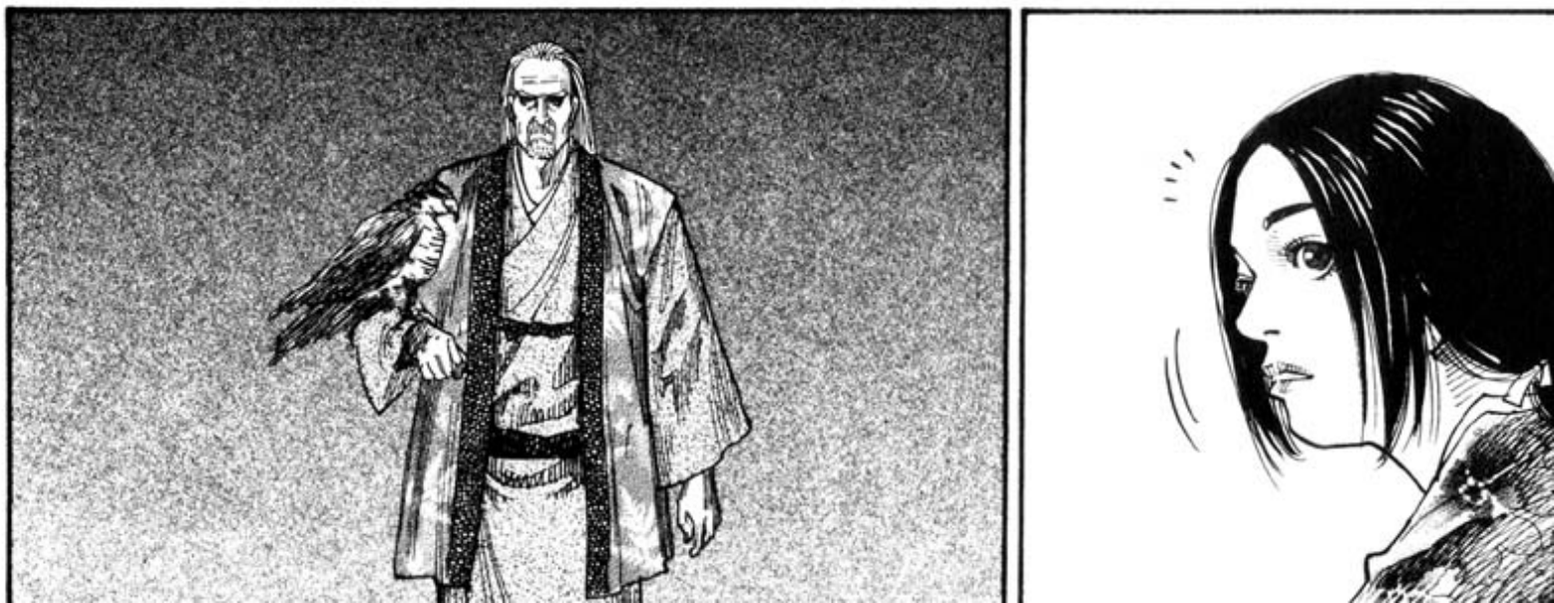


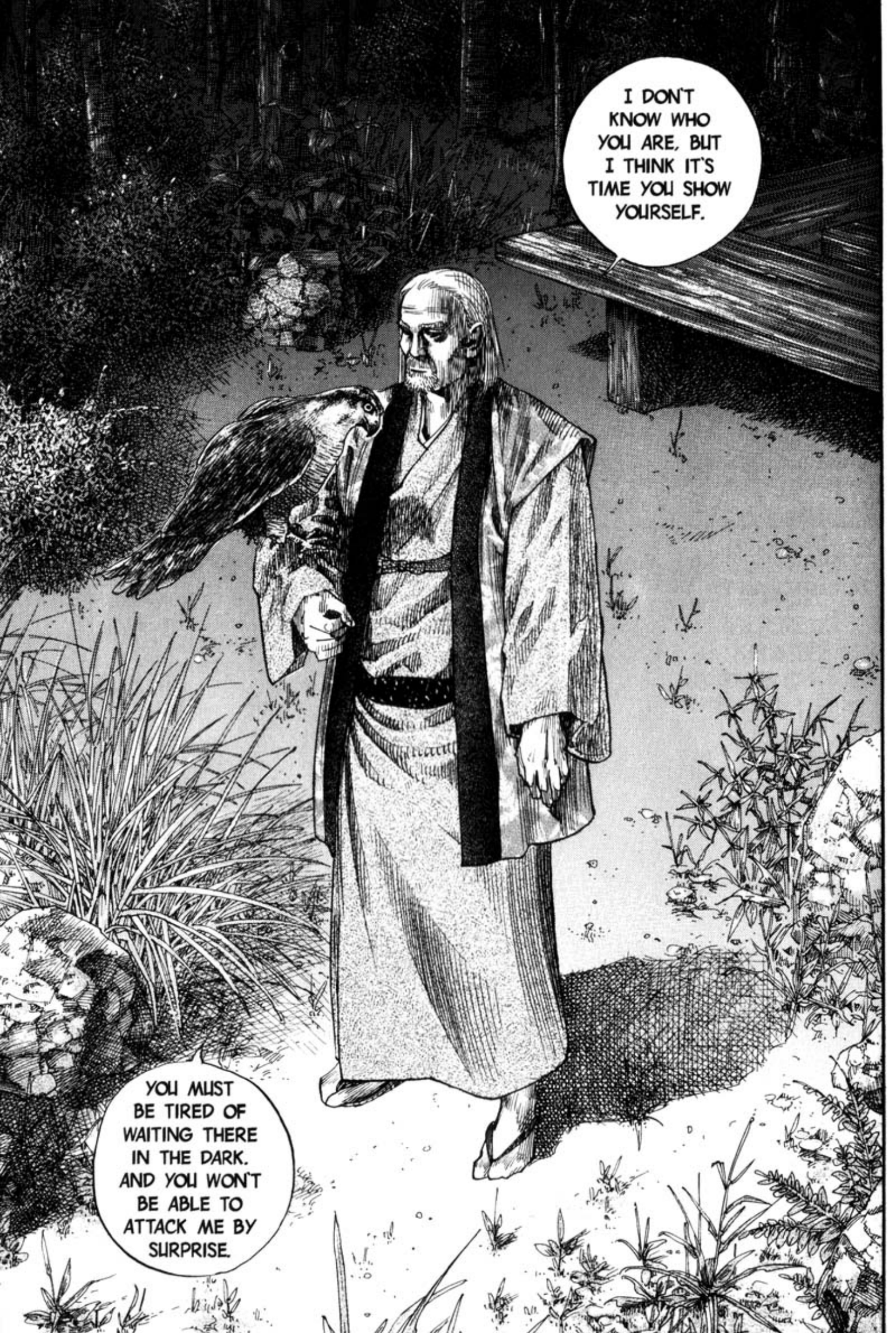
#66 The Master



FLP
YOU'LL CATCH A COLD OUT HERE, SIR.
CAN'T YOU SLEEP?
IT'S NOT THAT...

SIT DOWN, OTSŪ.
YOU MUST BE CAREFUL. A COLD CAN LEAD TO--




I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE, BUT I THINK IT'S TIME YOU SHOW YOURSELF.
YOU MUST BE TIRED OF WAITING THERE IN THE DARK. AND YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO ATTACK ME BY SURPRISE.

GASP!
FWOM
...

...SENIOR DISCIPLE OF YOSHIOKA SEIJŪRŌ OF THE EIGHT KYOTO STYLES.
I AM GION TŌJI...

I'M FULLY AWARE OF MY IMPER-TINENCE...
HOWEVER ...
I'VE LOST MY WAY...
THE YOSHIOKA ...
I WITNESSED SOMEONE WITH SKILLS BEYOND MY COMPREHENSION ...
I AM ASHAMED TO SAY THAT I DID NOT EVEN FACE HIM IN COMBAT...
ANY DIGNITY THAT I MAY HAVE HAD HAS BEEN SHATTERED.
OR PERHAPS I'VE LOST MY MIND.
HUFF
HUFF
I'VE NEVER BEEN AFRAID OF DEATH.
I WOULD LIKE TO MEET MY END...
...ON MY OWN TERMS...
HUFF
HUFF

I WOULD LIKE TO DIE...
ZZING
...FIGHTING THE MIGHTIEST OF WARRIORS— THE INDOMITABLE YAGYŪ SEKISHŪSAI MUNEYOSHI...

FWOOSH

THAT'S RIDICULOUS! HOW SELFISH CAN YOU BE?

OTSŪ! STAY SEATED!

THUD

MASTER ?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING!?
HOW DID YOU--!?
WE FINALLY MANAGED TO SEND YOSHIOKA DENSHICHIRŌ AWAY...
...AND NOW SEIJŪRŌ'S DISCIPLE SHOWS UP...
BASTARD! HOW DID YOU GET IN?
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU'RE NOT DEAD!
TUGG
THUP
YOU BASTARD!!

GION TŌJI...
IF YOU ARE LOST, YOU SHOULD SEEK THE AID OF YOUR OWN MASTER. NOT ME...

THE MORE DEDICATED ONE IS TO THE SWORD, THE MORE LIKELY YOU ARE TO LOSE YOUR WAY...

BUT NO MAN...
...IS AN ISLAND, UNTO HIMSELF.

SIR...

I WITNESSED IT...

FOR THE FIRST TIME...

...

PHEW! WHAT A NIGHT...

...

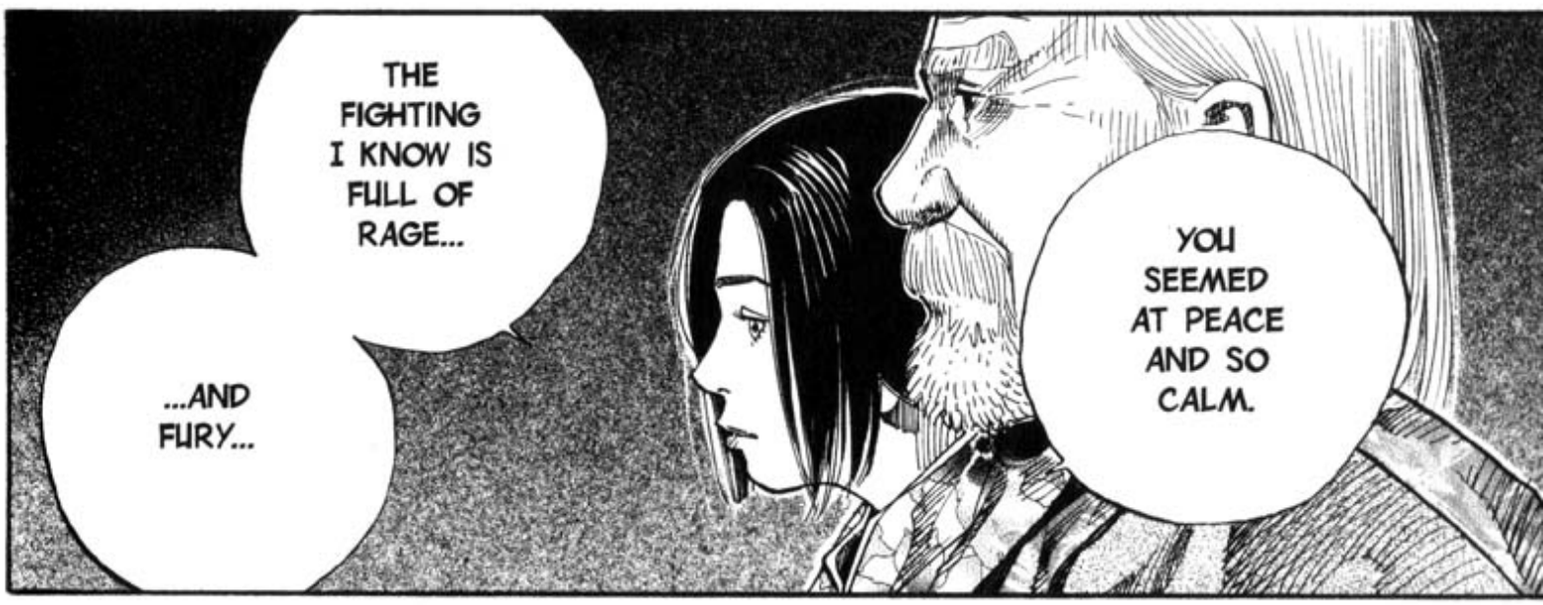
I SUPPOSE IT'S TIME TO GO TO BED.

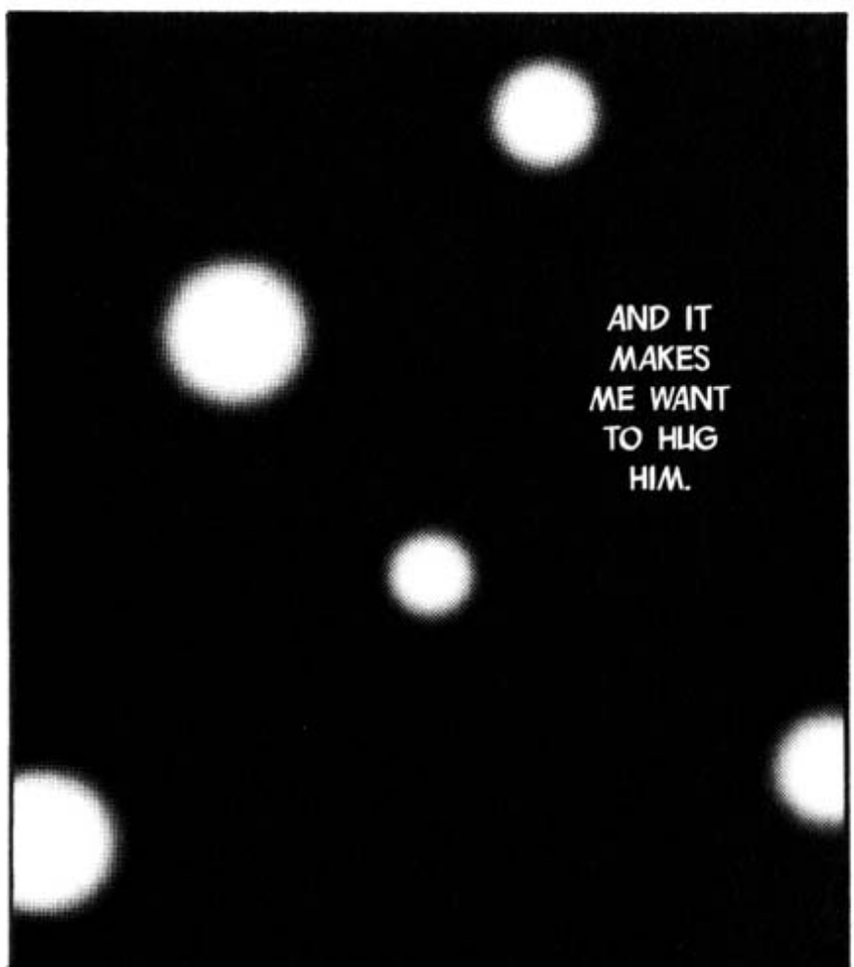
...

WIT-NESSED WHAT?

YOUR SWORDSMAN-SHIP.

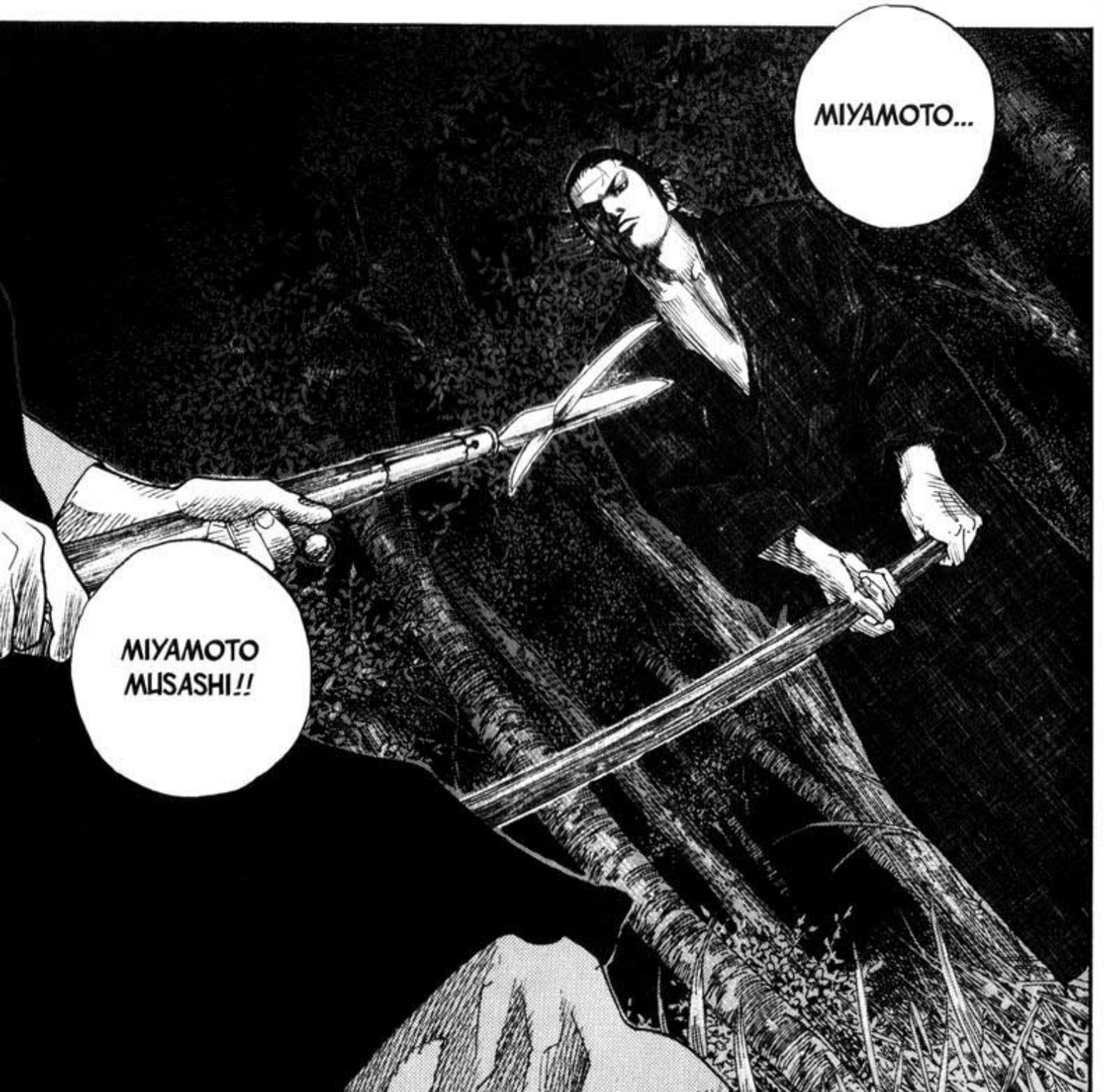
IS THAT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO KNOW THE WAY OF THE SWORD?
IS THAT...
HM?


THE FIGHTING I KNOW IS FULL OF RAGE...
...AND FURY...
YOU SEEMED AT PEACE AND SO CALM.


AND IT MAKES ME WANT TO HUG HIM.

SEEING THE DIFFERENCE ...
...ALMOST MAKES ME WANT TO CRY...

IS HE STILL ALIVE?
YOUR FIGHTING STYLES ARE COMPLETELY OPPOSITE...
WHAT WAS HIS NAME AGAIN?
YES... HE IS.
YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIEND...
AH, YES...
...!


MIYAMOTO...
MIYAMOTO MUSASHI!!

...THAT'S HIS NAME?
...!!
HMM...
NEVER HEARD OF HIM.
UM...
WHAT'S HE LIKE?
TELL ME ABOUT HIM.
HM?

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...

INSHUN JUST MIGHT BE ON THE LOSING END...

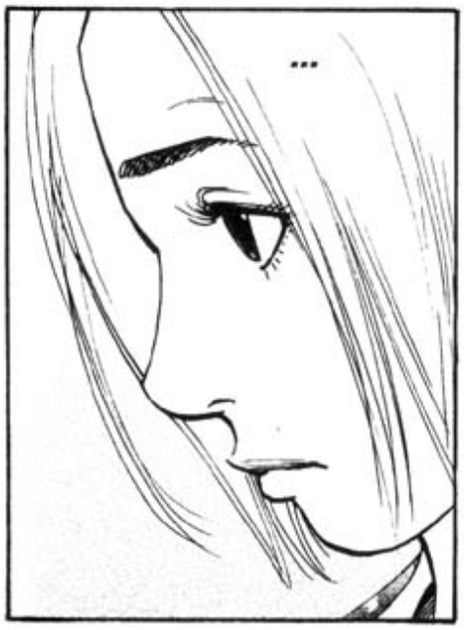
A CONFRON-TATION OF WILLS SO INTENSE...
...NEITHER CAN AFFORD TO MAKE A MOVE.

HAVE YOU SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE, AGON?
SIR?

...IT'S ABSOLUTELY DRAINING ON BOTH FIGHTERS.

EVEN INSHUN?
TAKE A CLOSE LOOK.

WELL, HE USED TO BE CALLED SHINMEN TAKEZŌ...
HE WAS FEARED BY EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE BECAUSE HE WAS SO VIOLENT.
WHO IS MIYAMOTO MUSASHI?
HE FOLLOWS THE WAY OF THE SWORD?


...

...!!

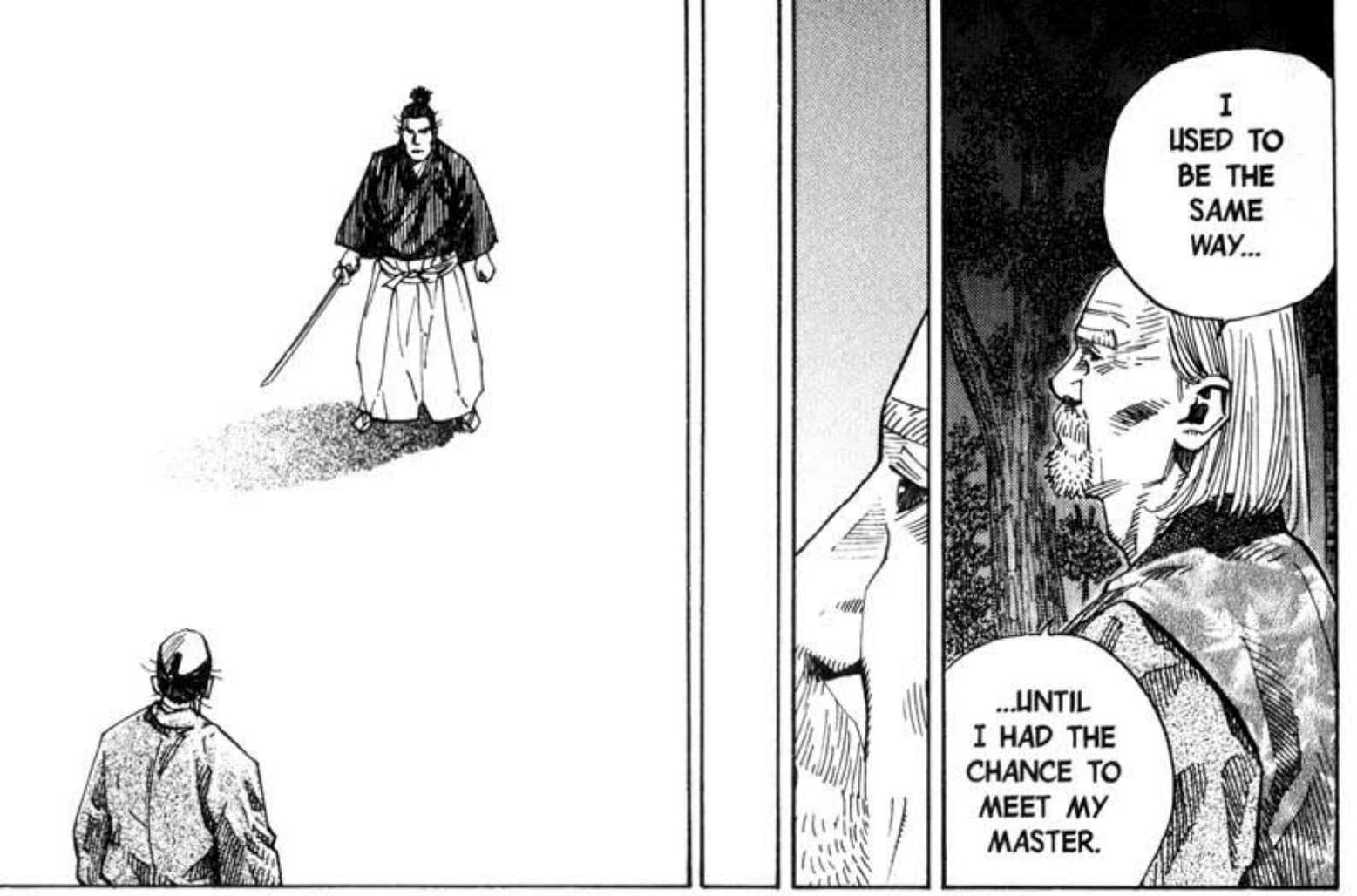
YOU CERTAINLY DO SEEM TO ENJOY TALKING ABOUT HIM.
HMPH!
DO YOU LOVE HIM?
WELL, DO YOU?

A MAN LIVING IN A WORLD OF RAGE AND FURY...

HAH!

MIYAMOTO MUSASHI...
HMM...

...!!
HMM...


I USED TO BE THE SAME WAY...
...UNTIL I HAD THE CHANCE TO MEET MY MASTER.

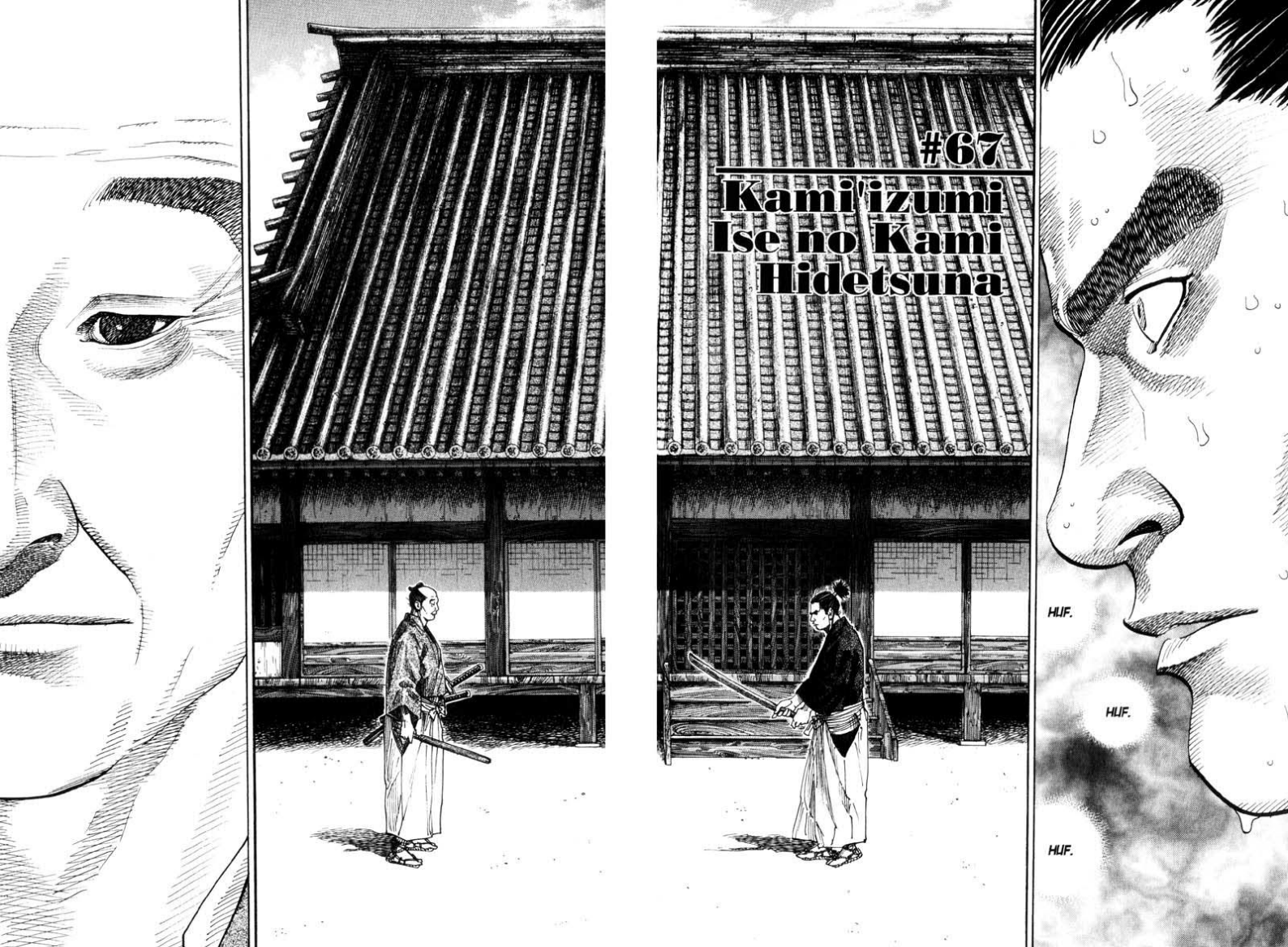
BUT YOU'RE ALREADY 50 YEARS OLD.
I HAVE RESPECT FOR YOU.
THE MIGHTY KAMI'IZUMI ISE NO KAMI HIDETSUNA...

THIS FIGHT IS MINE!

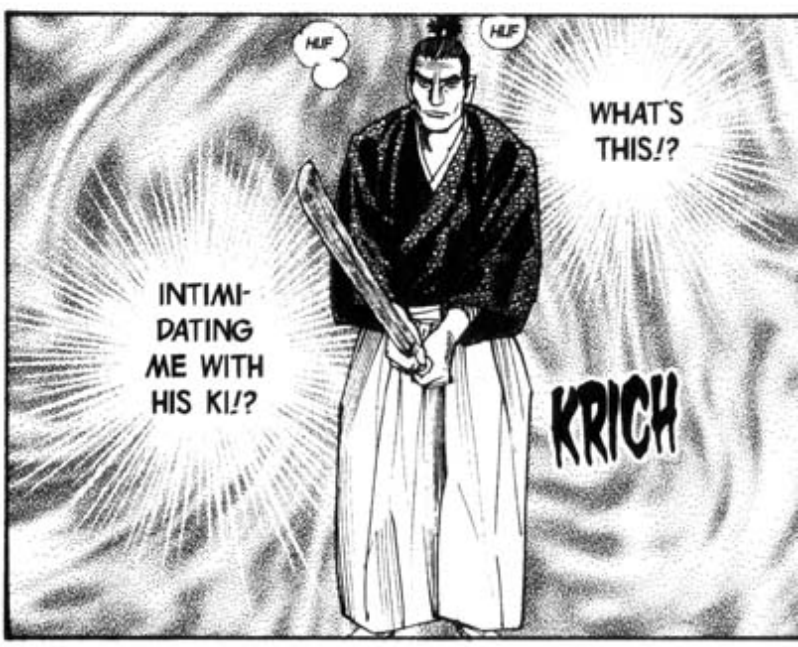
Vagabond

大殿様。
(THE GREAT LORD)
犬っぽくなってきた
(HE'S COME TO RESEMBLE A DOG.)

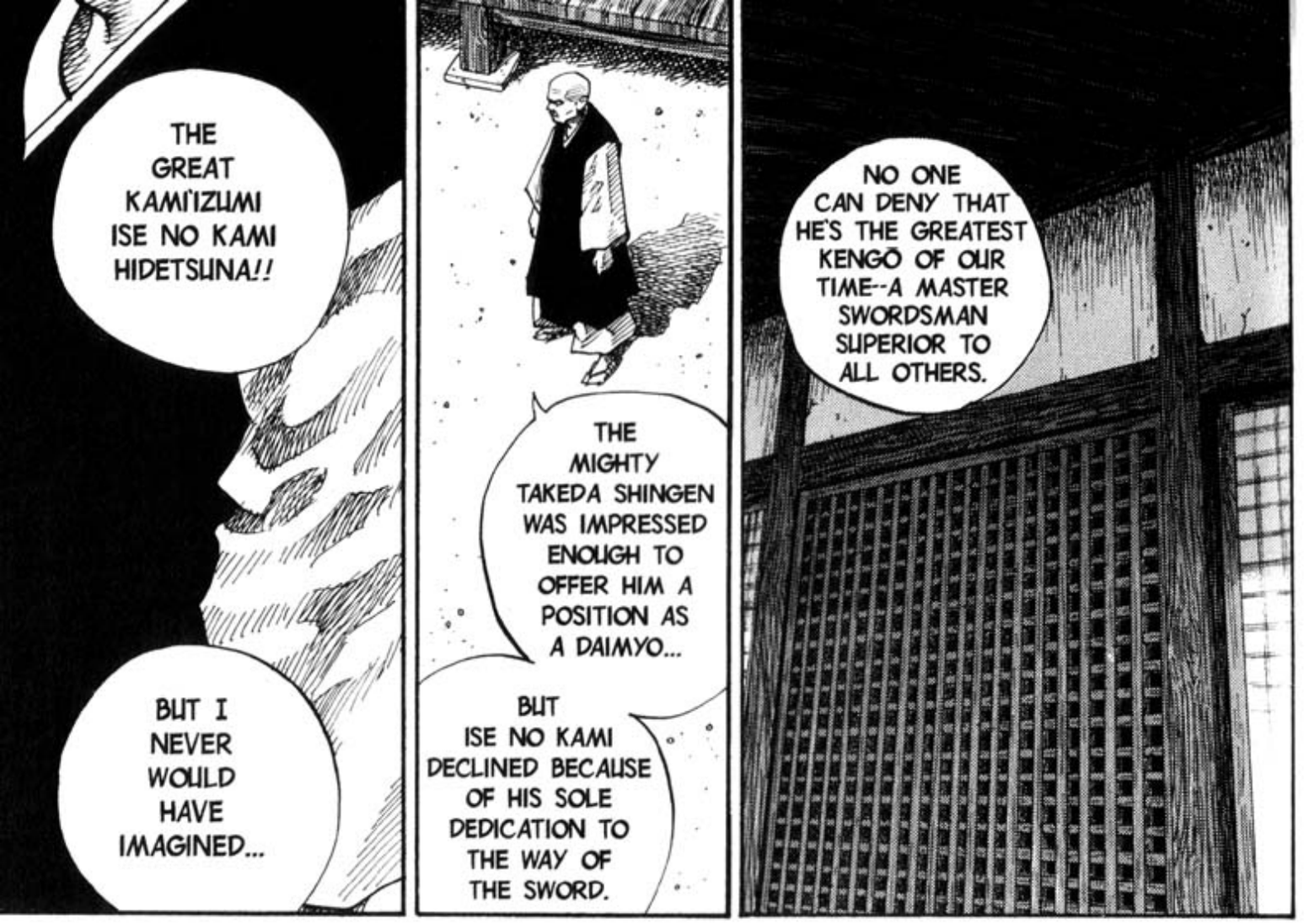
YOU MUSTN'T BE SO RASH.
YOU'LL UNDERMINE YOUR TRUE STRENGTH IF YOU GET TOO WORKED UP!
YAGYŪ...
YAGYŪ TAJIMA NO KAMI MUNEYOSHI ...
QUITE AN INTENSE YOUNG MAN!!


#67
Kami'izumi
Ise no Kami
Hidetsuna
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

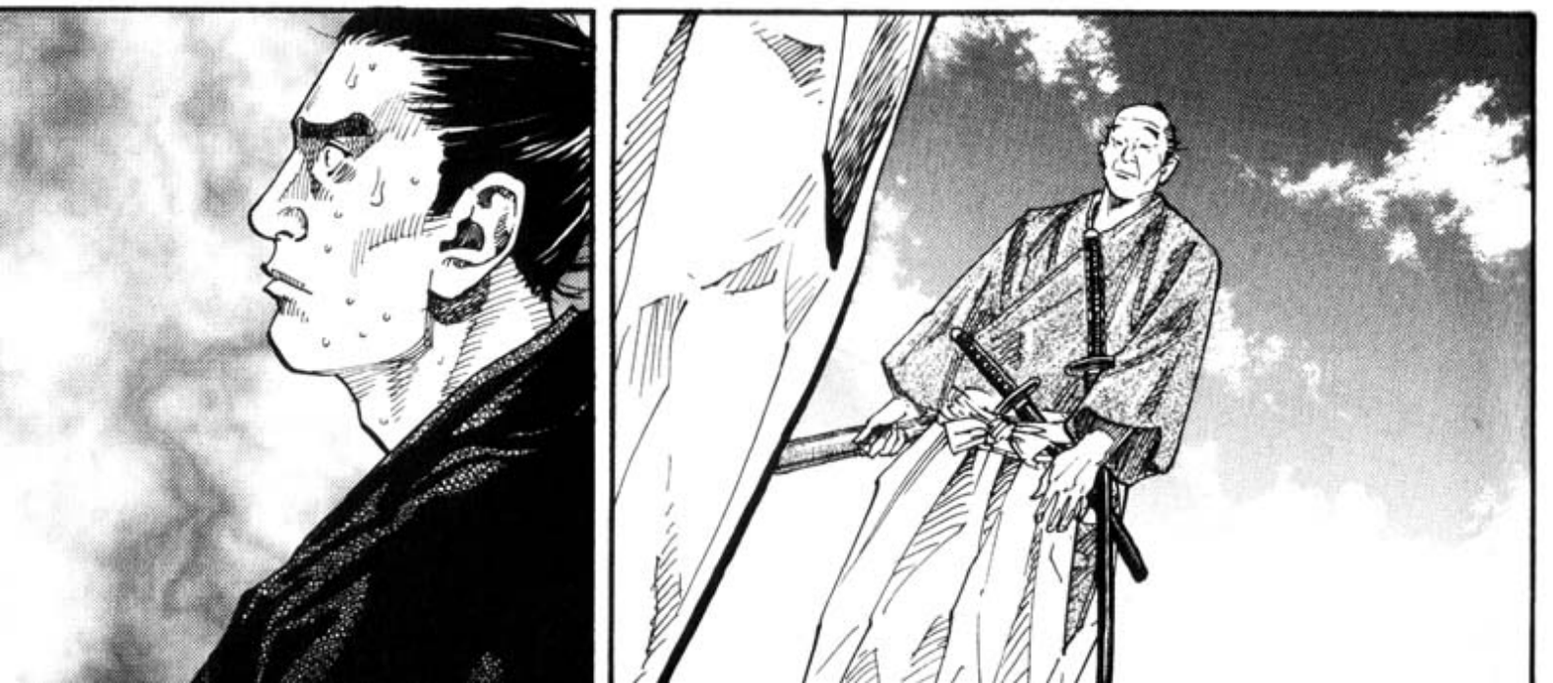
ISENOKAMI HAS NO BLOODTHIRST WHATSOEVER.
HOW!? HOW CAN THAT BE!?


HUF
HUF
WHAT'S THIS!?
INTIMI-DATING ME WITH HIS KI!?
KRICH

IT'S MY OWN BLOODTHIRST.
NO, THIS IS A REFLECTION OF MYSELF.


THE GREAT KAMI'IZUMI ISE NO KAMI HIDETSUNA!!
BUT I NEVER WOULD HAVE IMAGINED...
THE MIGHTY TAKEDA SHINGEN WAS IMPRESSED ENOUGH TO OFFER HIM A POSITION AS A DAIMYO...
BUT ISE NO KAMI DECLINED BECAUSE OF HIS SOLE DEDICATION TO THE WAY OF THE SWORD.
NO ONE CAN DENY THAT HE'S THE GREATEST KENGŌ OF OUR TIME--A MASTER SWORDSMAN SUPERIOR TO ALL OTHERS.

HE'S SO CALM...IS THIS WHAT A KENGŌ IS LIKE?

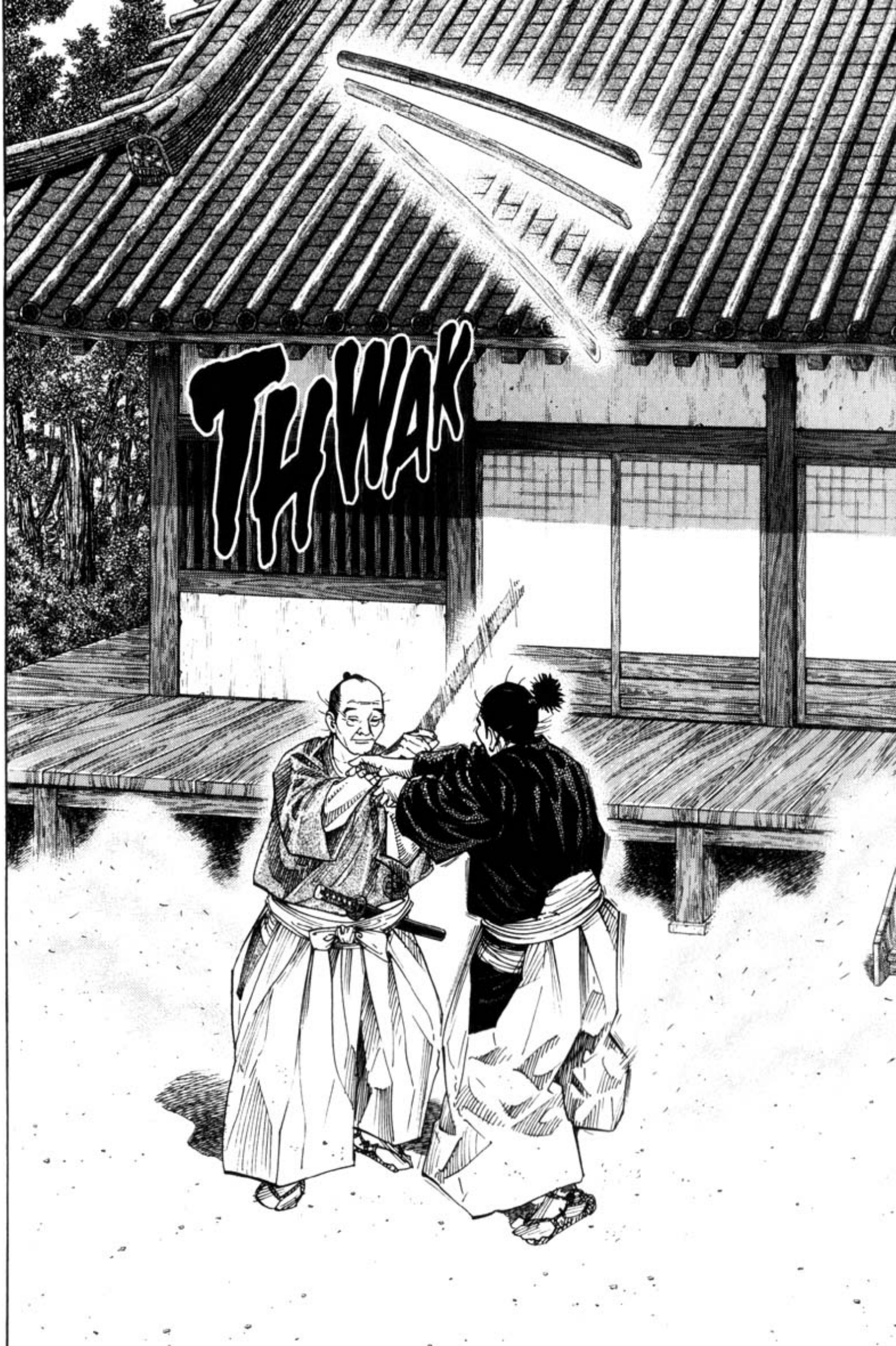


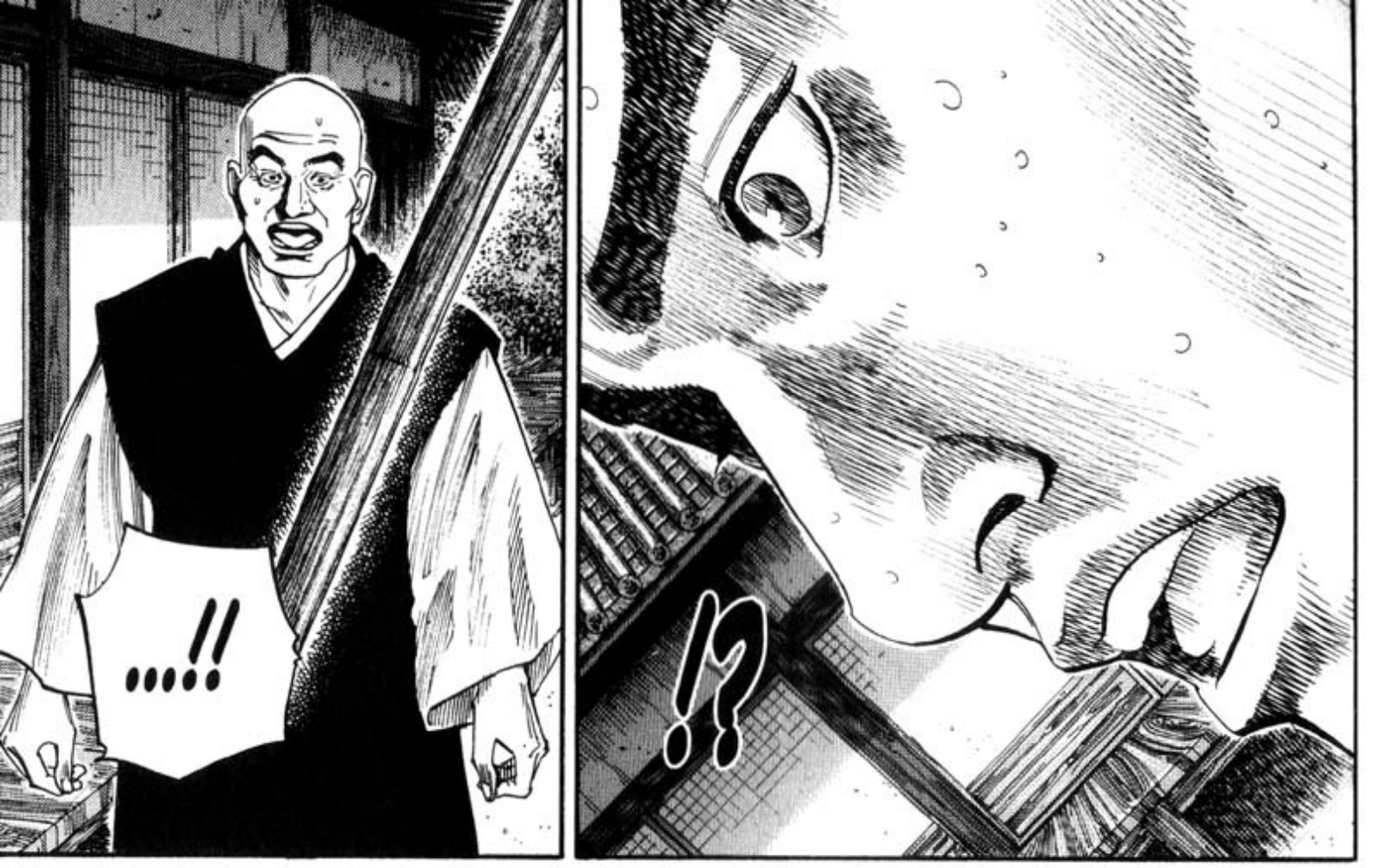
I FEEL COMPLETELY OVERWHELMED...

!

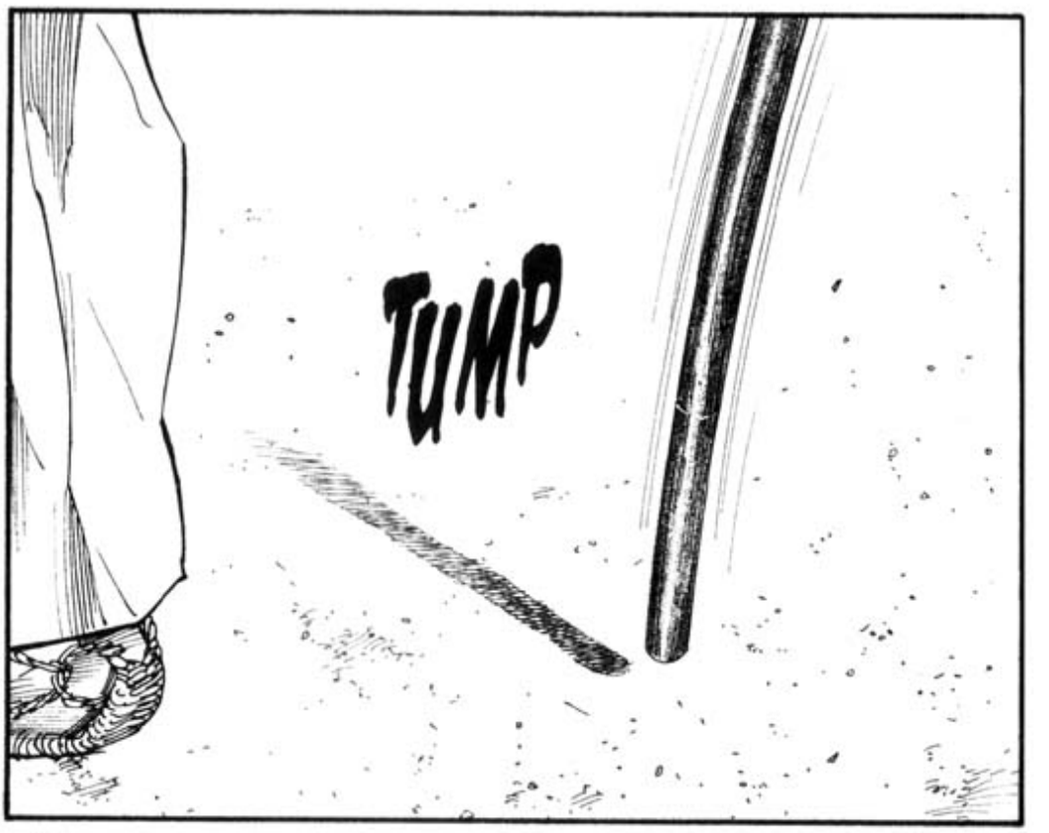
FOOSH

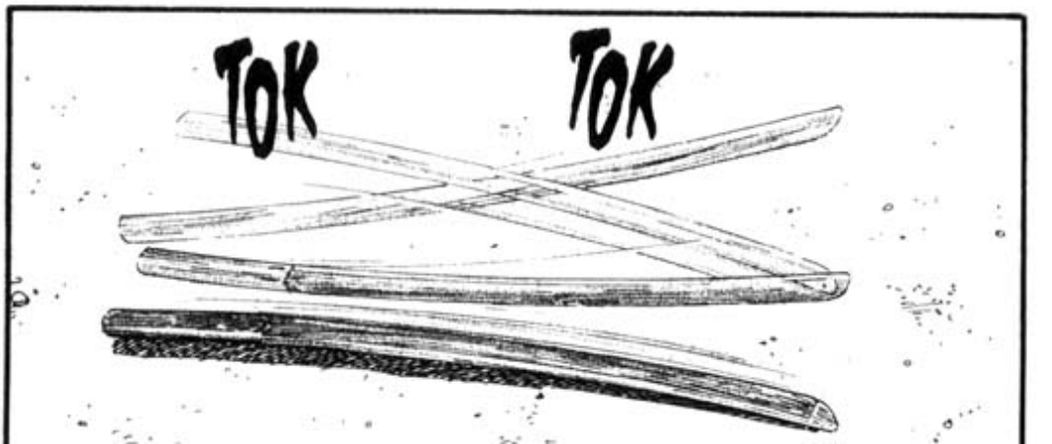
!!


THWAK


...!!
!?

WHA--?
WHAT HAP-PENED !?


TUMP


TOK
TOK

I AM KAKUZENBŌ IN'EI, THE MASTER OF HŌZŌIN!!
KRICH
I, TOO, REQUEST A MATCH WITH YOU, SIR!!
...
LEATHER WRAPPED AROUND BAMBOO?
WHAT AN ODD PRACTICE SWORD.
GRP

HOW CAN HE FIGHT WITH THAT...!?

...!!

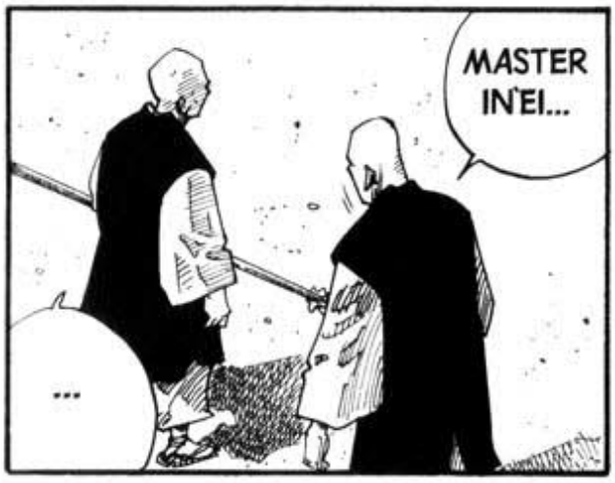
FWIP
!?

HMPH!
BASTARD!
YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE ME ON UNARMED !?

KRICH
YAHH!!

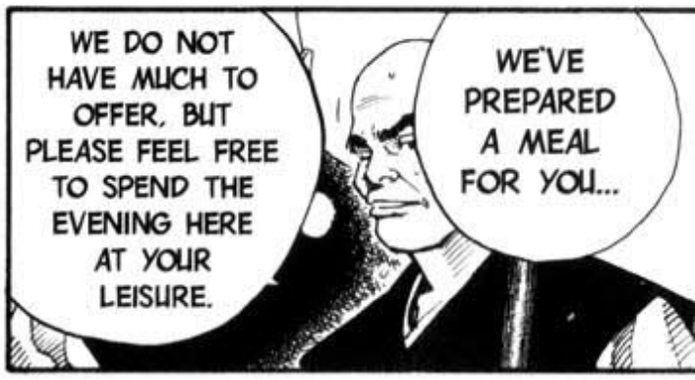
I...
I CONCEDE...!
...
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.
HUF.

GRP
...


MASTER IN'EI...
...

I DON'T UNDER-STAND...
HOW DID HE TAKE MY SPEAR!?

SIR...


WE DO NOT HAVE MUCH TO OFFER, BUT PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SPEND THE EVENING HERE AT YOUR LEISURE.
WE'VE PREPARED A MEAL FOR YOU...

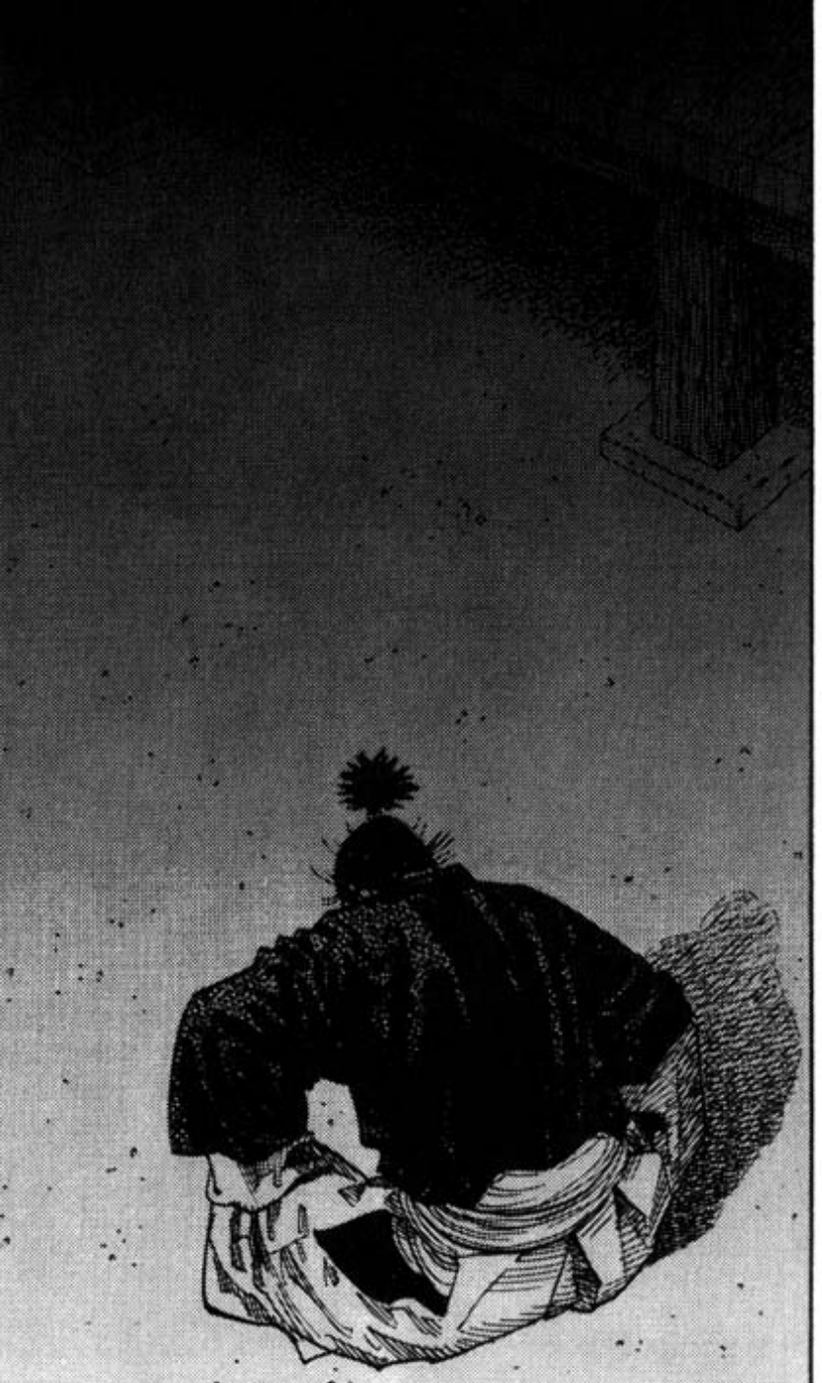
SENSEI, SHALL WE TAKE THEM UP ON THEIR OFFER?

I REQUEST ANOTHER MATCH!!
KRICH
PLEASE SIR, ONE MORE MATCH!
I BESEECH YOU!
YAGYŪ!
YAGYŪ...
THE MASTER IS OLD AND WE'VE TRAVELED A LONG WAY...
I ACCEPT MY DEFEAT...
I NEED TO KNOW!!
BUT I WANT TO FIND OUT *HOW* I LOST!

I WANT TO FIGHT THE MASTER, NOT SOME KID...

IF YOU MUST INSIST...
...THEN I SHALL ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE. I AM HIKITA BUNGORŌ, THE MASTER'S NEPHEW AND DISCIPLE.

THWAK



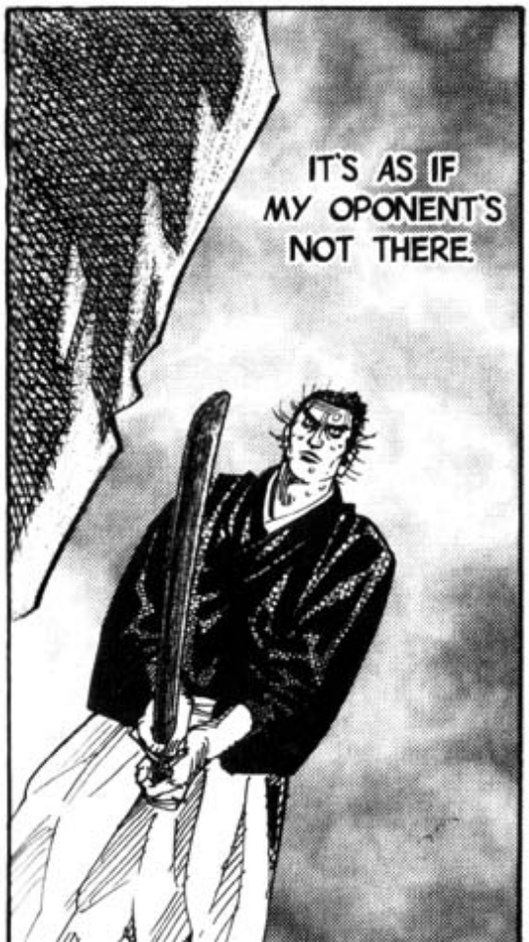
THE FOLLOWING DAY...

...AS WELL AS THE DAY AFTER THAT, YAGYŪ TENACIOUSLY CONTINUED TO CHALLENGE ISE-NO-KAMI.

WHO IS MY OPPONENT?

THE END RESULT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.

...AS IF I'M BEING CONSUMED.
THE MOMENT I STEP IN, I BECOME SURROUNDED BY A STRANGE WARMTH...

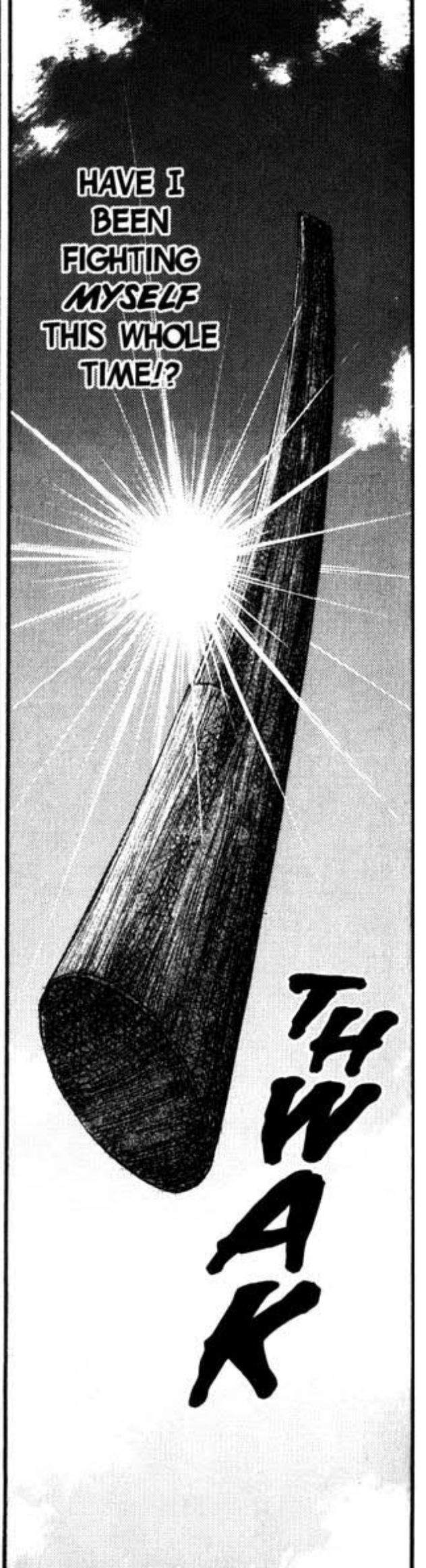

IT'S AS IF MY OPONENT'S NOT THERE.

...AND I LOSE MY FREEDOM.
WHEN I TRY TO FIGHT AGAINST IT, MY BODY TENSES UP...

HIS STUDIED TECHNIQUE IS MAGNIFICENT.

BUT HIS HEART, HIS SOUL...
HE FOCUSES TOO MUCH ON HIS "SELF".

THOSE ARE THE VERY WORDS...
...OF MY MASTER...


HAVE I BEEN FIGHTING MYSELF THIS WHOLE TIME!?
THWAK

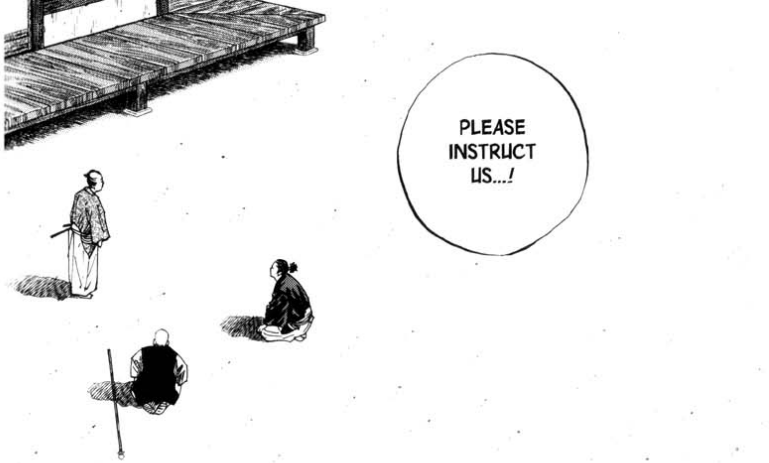
WHAT IS THE WAY OF THE SWORD?
KRRCH

Vagabond

あぁ…!?
(OH...)

"THE WAY OF THE SWORD"...?
I...
KRICH
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

#68 No Sword


PLEASE INSTRUCT US...!

BACK THEN, I LIVED IN A WORLD OF CHAOS AND FURY.

SHUF

SHUF

MY "SELF."
THAT'S WHAT YAGYŪ MUNEYOSHI'S SWORDSMANSHIP WAS ALL ABOUT.

"I SHALL DEFEAT MY OPPONENT."

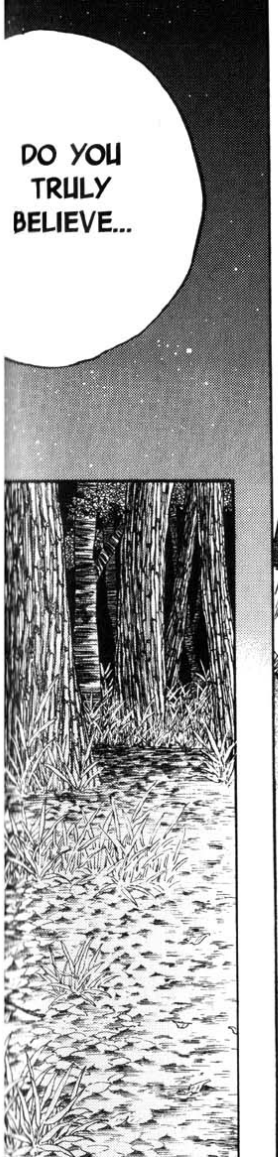
"...WITH MY POWER..."

"...WITH MY STRENGTH..."
"...WITH MY EXISTENCE..."
"LOOK AT ME..."

...

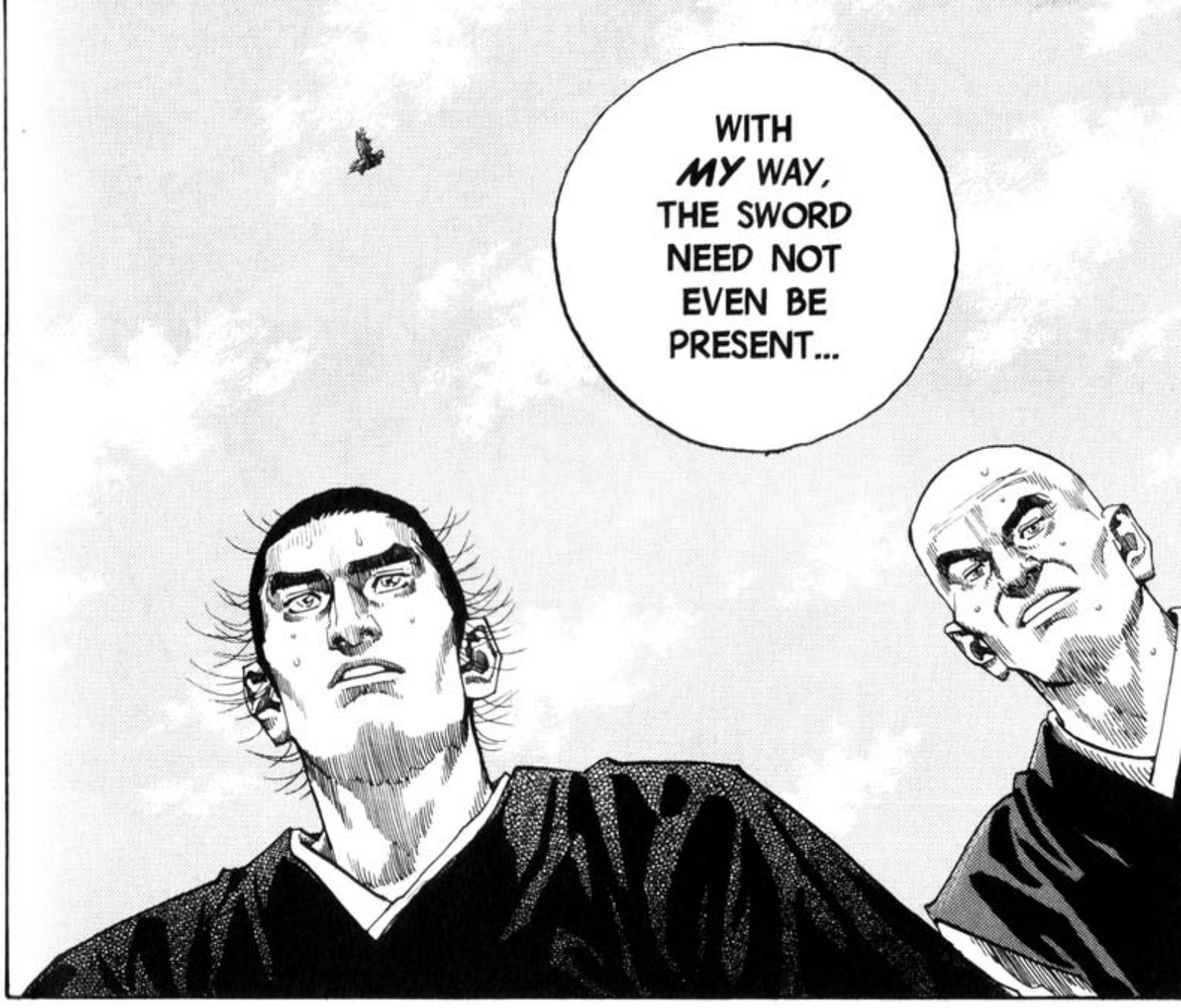
HE ASKED OF US...
"WHY WOULD YOU DEDICATE YOUR LIVES TO THAT?"
THE MASTER...
LOOK AT ME...

...THAT THE WAY OF THE SWORD IS SO TRIVIAL?

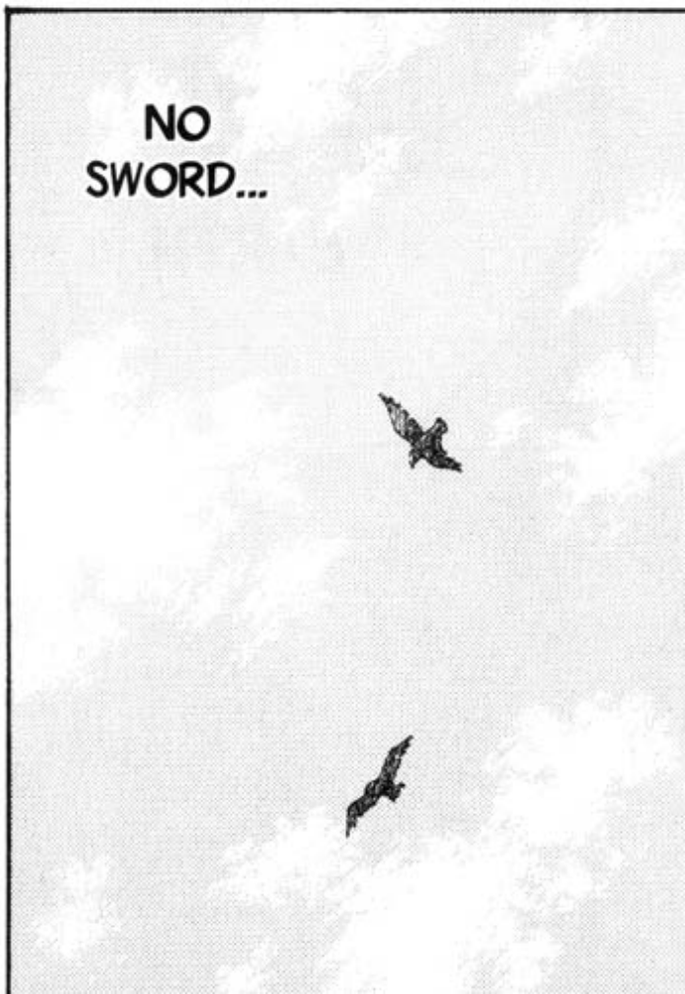

DO YOU TRULY BELIEVE...

...IS
ONE WITH
HEAVEN
AND
EARTH.

MY
SWORD...


WITH MY WAY, THE SWORD NEED NOT EVEN BE PRESENT...

FWSSSH


NO SWORD...

HSS
SHUF
!!

MUSASHI HAS THE UPPER HAND...

INSHUN...

HE'S RETREATING!

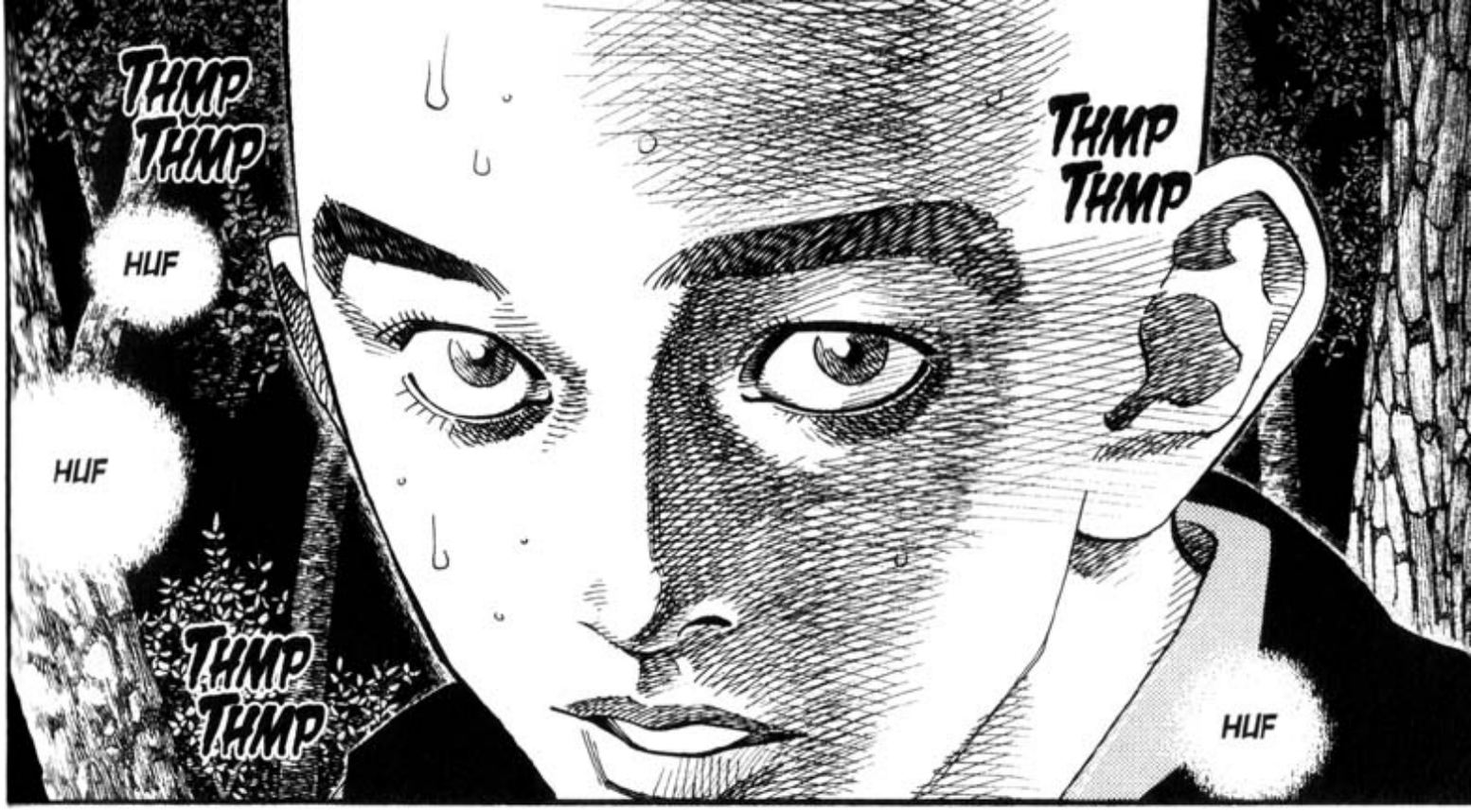
!?

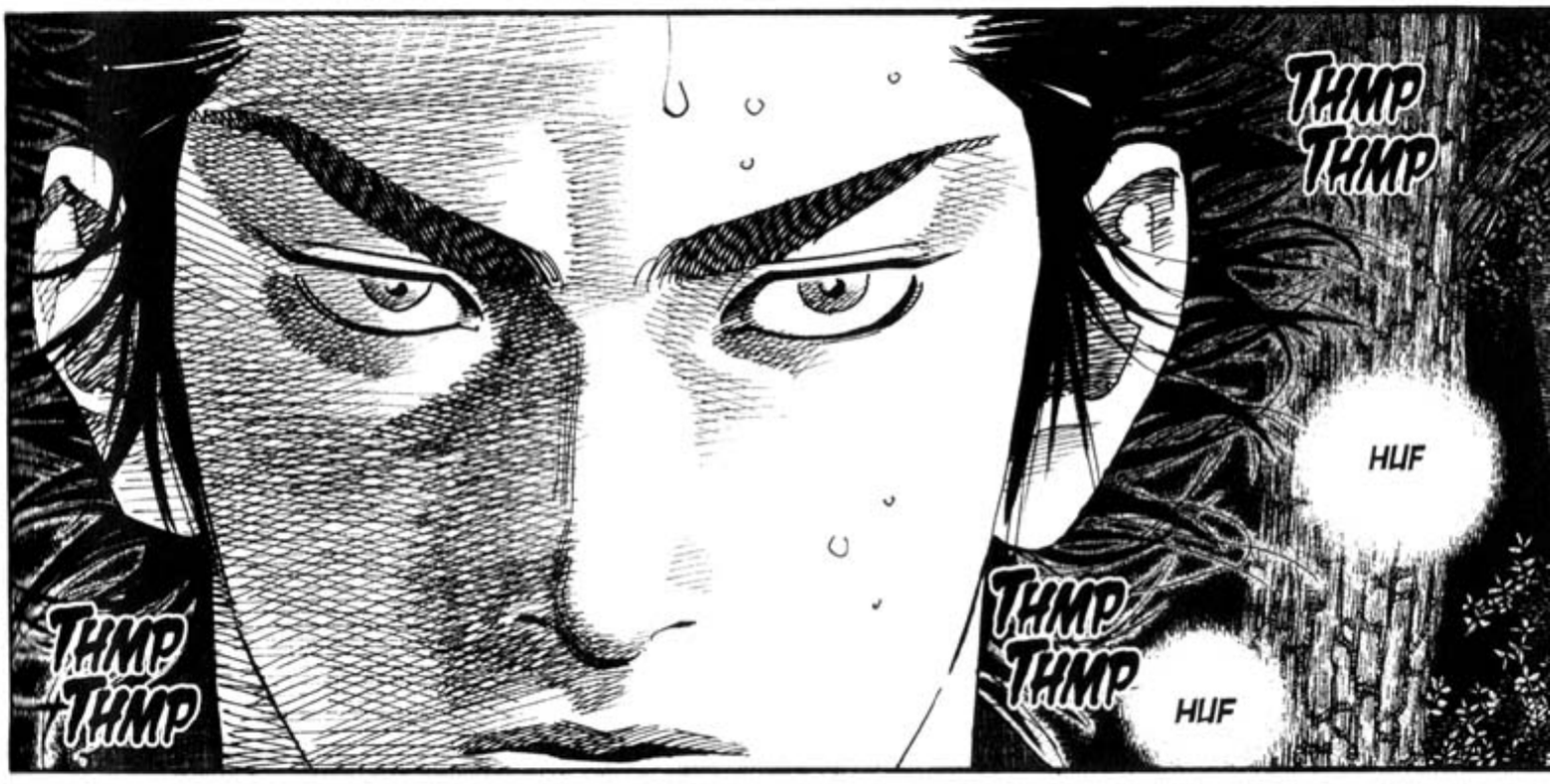
SHUF
SHUF

TUNK
!!
KRICH
SHUF

FWOOM

Swip
Fwup


THMP THMP
HUF
HUF
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
HUF


THMP THMP
THMP THMP
HUF
THMP THMP
HUF

WHEN I FIRST MET MUSASHI...
...HERE IN THE MOUNTAINS ...?
DOES INSHUN HAVE A DIS-ADVANTAGE ...
THE MOUNTAINS ...

HUF
HUF
...HE SAID THE MOUNTAINS WERE HIS ONLY MASTER.
HUF

HE DOES NOT FEAR INSHUN'S SPEAR...
HE'S NOT AFRAID...

HE TOSSED ASIDE HIS BAMBOO SWORD AND STOOD BEFORE ME...

THE MASTER...

NO SWORD...

HIS PRESENCE WAS SUBLIME...
...AS IF HIS ENTIRE BODY WERE MELTING OUT INTO THE SKY.

I CRIED OUT FOR ALL I WAS WORTH.

HUF
HUF
HUF
BUT, I REALLY WANTED TO JUST THROW DOWN MY SPEAR AND RUN AWAY.
THMP THMP
THMP THMP
I RUSHED AT HIM SCREAMING AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS.
IT WAS ALL I COULD DO.
HUF
HUF
HUF
THMP THMP
INSHUN...
THMP THMP
HUF
HUF
HUF
THMP THMP

AUAHHH!!

About the Author

VAGABOND was created by Takehiko Inoue, author of the best selling manga *SLAM DUNK*, with over 100 million copies in print worldwide. For his work on *VAGABOND*, Inoue received the 2000 Media Arts award for Manga from the Japanese Ministry of Culture as well as the 2000 Kodansha Award for best manga. Most recently in 2002, Inoue's *VAGABOND* received the prestigious Tezuka award for best manga. To date, *VAGABOND* has sold well over 22 million copies throughout the world. In addition to his numerous manga titles, Inoue also created the character designs for the PlayStation basketball game, *ONE ON ONE*.

About *VAGABOND* and *Miyamoto Musashi*

Takehiko Inoue's *VAGABOND*, based on Eiji Yoshikawa's novel *MUSASHI*, is a fictional account of the life of Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645). The historical figure Miyamoto Musashi, author of the philosophical strategy guide *A BOOK OF FIVE RINGS*, was a master of the sword and was revered as a "sword-saint." He founded the Niten Ichi style of sword fighting which is typified by fighting with both long and short swords at once, holding the long sword with the right hand and the short sword with the left. Musashi was also a master of the "gentler arts"—he was a master of *sumi-e* (black ink drawings), metalworking, and woodcarving. The films, *THE SAMURAI TRILOGY*, directed by Hiroshi Inagaki and starring Toshiro Mifune were also based on Yoshikawa's *MUSASHI*. Perhaps inspired by the huge success of *VAGABOND* in Japan, in 2003, NHK produced the historical period drama, *MUSASHI*. Also based on Yoshikawa's novel, this drama stars kabuki actor Shinnosuke Ichikawa as Musashi and TV star Ryoko Yonekura as Otsu.

Glossary and Extraneous Background Information

Hozoin Spear Technique
Created by the Buddhist monk Kakuzenbo Hoin In'ei (1521-1607) of Hozoin Temple which was a sub-temple of Kofukuji Temple in Nara. This spear technique is typified by quick dexterous movements rather than the use of brute force.

Kami'izumi Ise no Kami Hidetsuna (1508-1577(?))
The son of Kami'izumi Ise no Kami Hidetsugu, the lord of Kami'izumi Castle in present-day Gunma Prefecture. Hidetsuna founded the Shinkage-ryu Style of sword fighting and was such an accomplished swordsman and military strategist that he was once recruited by the famed Takeda Shingen. Hidetsuna, however, declined the post, stating that he preferred to travel throughout the land so that he might perfect his swordsmanship. Many notable figures studied under Hidetsuna including the esteemed Yagyu Munenori and Hozoin In'ei.

The Sengoku Period and the Battle of Sekigahara
The Warring States or *Sengoku* period (1482-1558) in Japan was a time of chaos and conflict. Central authorities, in the form of the imperial court and the shogunate, had grown increasingly weaker and the land was effectively ruled autonomously by numerous *daimyo* (domainal lords). Looking to expand their spheres of control, the *daimyo* were constantly at war with each other. One *daimyo* in particular, Oda Nobunaga, set out on a mission to unify Japan by means of conquest. Incredibly successful, by the time of his assassination in 1582, he managed to control approximately one-third of all of Japan. One of Nobunaga's chief generals, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, became Nobunaga's successor to carry on the quest for unification. Through a process of conquest and conciliation, Hideyoshi succeeded in creating an orderly federation amongst the *daimyo*, and by 1590, order was restored to Japan under Hideyoshi's rule. Hideyoshi's death in 1598, however, presented the question of succession. Most of the *daimyo* from the domains in the west remained loyal to the Toyotomi Clan and its five-year-old heir, Toyotomi Hideyori. Tokugawa Ieyasu, however, leading the major *daimyo* from central and eastern Japan, challenged the Toyotomi clan's leadership. The two sides clashed at the Battle of Sekigahara (1600) in Mino (located in present day Gifu Prefecture) where the Tokugawa claimed an overwhelming victory. From that point on, the Tokugawa clan would effectively rule Japan for the next 250 years.

Takuan Soho (1573-1645)
A monk of the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism, by the time Takuan was 37, he was appointed abbot of the leading temple of the Rinzai sect, Daitokuji. Takuan was an important figure whose acute and brutally honest advice was sought by influential and powerful figures such as Emperor Go Mizuno and the shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu. His correspondence to Yagyu Munenori discussing Zen and swordsmanship entitled *THE UNFETTERED MIND* has become an influential treatise in both the areas of philosophy and martial arts. The pickled daikon radish, *takuan*, also bears his name.

The Yagyu Clan
Yagyu Muneyoshi Sekishusai (1527-1606) was the founder of the famed Yagyu-Shinkage school of sword fighting. His son Yagyu Munenori (1571-1646) was one of Tokugawa's key general's at the Battle of Sekigahara. Munenori was appointed as the official fencing instructor of the Tokugawa Clan and in 1632 the Yagyu were appointed as the *ometsuke*—responsible for the surveillance of the *daimyo*. Although the Yagyu clan has been depicted in Kazuo Koike's *LONE WOLF AND CUB* as the plotters of the downfall of Itto Ogami, the general Japanese popular culture take on the Yagyu Clan is more positive. More specifically, Munenori's son, Yagyu Jubei (1607-1650), is viewed as a wandering hero protecting the people from evil-doers.

Yoshioka Kempo (dates unknown)
A distinguished warrior during the *Sengoku* period (1482-1558) and the founder of the renowned Yoshioka school of sword fighting. Yoshioka Kempo mastered the Kyohachi style of swordmanship and then modified it to form the Yoshioka style. In the context of Inoue's *VAGABOND* as well as in Yoshikawa's *MUSASHI*, Yoshioka Seijuro and Denshichiro are Kempo's sons who are historically thought to have dueled with Miyamoto Musashi on numerous occasions.

This is the LAST page of this comic!

VAGABOND has been printed to read from **right** to **left** in its original Japanese format–presenting Takehiko Inoue's dynamic artwork the way it was meant to be seen!

When most Japanese comics are published in English, a mirror image of the original artwork is printed in order to accommodate the left to right reading orientation of English. For this reason, errors in continuity occasionally occur and characters who were originally right-handed suddenly become left-handed. In order to present manga in its purest form, *VAGABOND* is being printed to read from right to left. This way, kimono are worn with the left side over the right and the samurai's long and short swords are carried on the **left** side, the way they were traditionally worn.

To properly enjoy *VAGABOND*, start from the other end of this comic and read from right to left.

A note on names: The names presented within the context of this comic are presented in the traditional Japanese order–surname, followed by first name. "Miyamoto" is Miyamoto Musashi's last name and "Musashi" is his first name. The name of the creator of *VAGABOND*, however, has been presented first name first, last name second. "Takehiko" is the author's first name and "Inoue" is his last name.

editor's choice

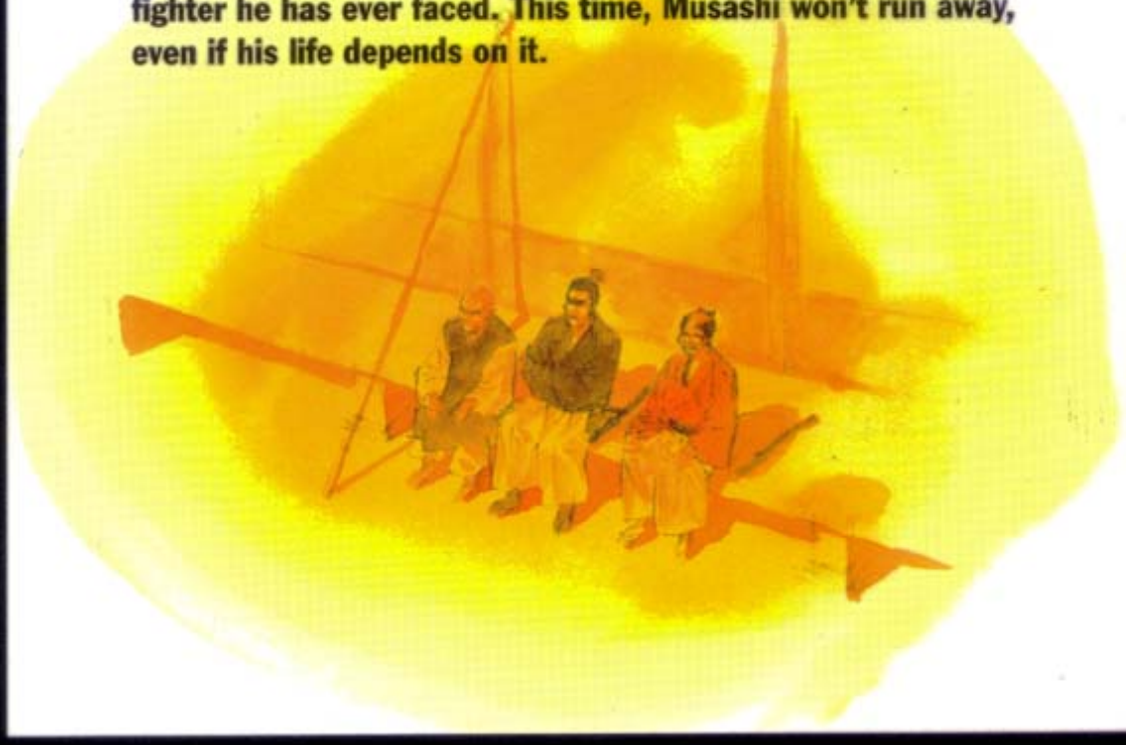
VIZ Graphic Novel

$9.95 USA/$13.95 CAN

Vagabond

"Inoue's artwork is flat-out gorgeous."
—Randy Lander, TheFourthRail.com

Daunting tasks lie before Miyamoto Musashi—He must overcome his own personal demons as he prepares for a rematch with Inshun, the most technically proficient and deadliest fighter he has ever faced. This time, Musashi won't run away, even if his life depends on it.



VIZ

www.viz.com

This book reads from right to left.

RATED M FOR MATURE

ISBN 1-59116-073-1

9 781591 160731 50995

7 82009 14623 0 00995

VIZ

Fp: Facebook.com/meganebuk